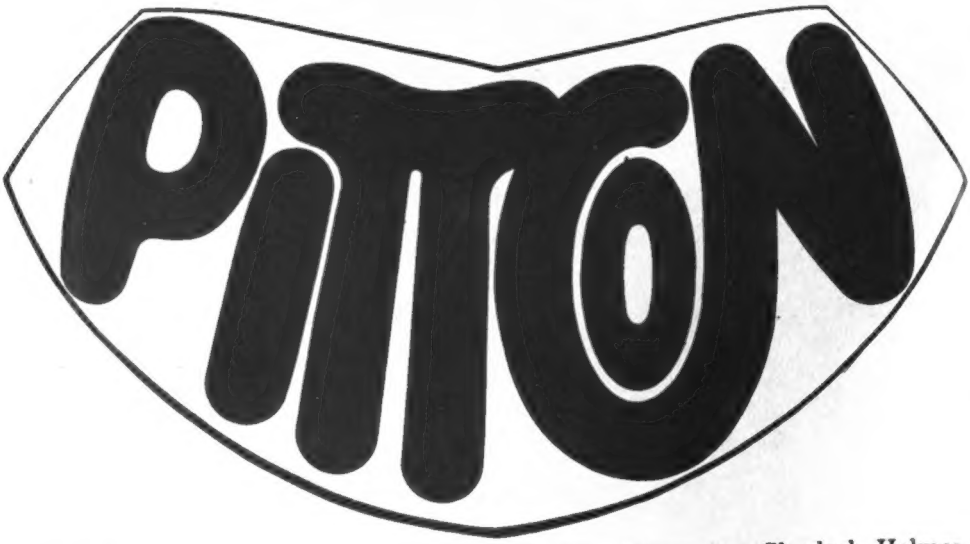
PITTSBURGH FAN FORUM

PITTON

No. 36 75¢

THE BULLETIN OF THE PITTSBURGH COMIX CLUB



Club Preview

Starting at noon, Thursday, April 27. (You must have a paid-up PFF subscription to attend the preview.)

Latest information on PITTCON will be supplied, along with some previews of films and events slated for the Con. We will be working on the club story, "Captain Pittsburgh" with Tim Corrigan, and John Johns will be doing caricatures of the PCC members. There will be a slide show, and a photo session at the Hillman Library in Oakland. Pro guests will include Ron Wilson and Howard Bender. Plus much, much more.

Tenative Con Schedule

Friday, April 28, 1978
8-9am Set-up Northway Mall
10 am Opening of con; Art Show in Community Room
1 pm Slide Show; Club Information Area
5 pm Chalk Talk; John Johns, Community Room
7 pm Discussion; Sherlock Holmes, Jim Zunic, Community Room
9 pm Film presentation; Mirror Image

Saturday, April 29, 1978
8-9am Set-up
10 am-2 pm Cartoon Cartoonarama; Richard Felnagle
3-4 pm Out of theme Costume Competition
5-6 pm Theme Competition; Avengers vs. JLA
Legion of Superheroes Plot Session
Dinner Break
Magnificent Monopoly Game
Club Party
Club Suite, Sheraton Motor Inn North

Sunday, April 30, 1978
10:30-1:30 am Breakfast, Sheraton Motor Inn North
($4.00 each for PCC members and friends. Informal programming with guests at table happening before Con opens.)
Noon Con opens.
1 pm Auction of artists and writers
2:30 pm Superman movie slide show
3:30 pm Fan Press Panel
4:30 pm Film: THE QUIET MAN
6 pm Con closes

PITTSBURGH FAN FORUM

The Bulletin of the Pittsburgh Comix Club

Issue Number 36
April-May, 1978

CONTENTS

BEN PONDEXTER, PUBLISHER
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MARK LERER, EDITOR EMERITUS

CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS
Paul Bucciarelli
Fred Fredericks
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Gary Sassaman
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Tom Tuttle
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CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Tom Hegeman
Ron Kienzle
Mark Lerer
Ben Pondexter
Gary Sassaman
Howard Siegel
Tom Tuttle

2 Editorial

3 Publishorial Letters

7 An Interview with Street Enterprises

19 Cartooneers

23 As Siegel sees it

27 Comics and the Courts Part 2: Man of Steel vs. Men of Steal

32 And now a word from...

35 All Around

37 Club News

40 Parting Shots

PITTSBURGH FAN FORUM is published by the Pittsburgh Comix Club. Published bi-monthly. Subscriptions: $4.00 a year for six issues. Back issues available for $1.00 a copy. Advertising rates: $8.00 a page, $5.00 a half page. Address all correspondence to: Ben Pondexter, 827 Anaheim St., Pittsburgh, Pa., 15219. The Pittsburgh Comix Club is wholly responsible for the contents of this magazine. All comic book characters used here-in are copyrighted characters and are copy right their respective owners.

Editorial

It's that time again.

PITTCON is upon us.

As I write this it's still March. March is a big month for me. Four years ago I moved to Pittsburgh and started school at the Art Institute. It was, like any move of that size, a traumatic experience. On one side, I was looking forward to being on my own, in college. On the other, I experienced all the fears and frustration anyone and everyone feels when they first leave home.

The day after I arrived in Pittsburgh, I attended my first PITTSBURGH COMIX CLUB meeting. I felt much better. I had found a "home", with people who shared a common bond. Comics.

And that's what PITTCON is all about. We're all here for one reason: Comics. Some come for the books (right, Mark?), some come for the panels, or the pros, or the costume parade. Some are curious, some confused. But they all come because of their love for one medium: Comics.

Yeah...March is a big month for me. Four years since I started college, two years since I graduated, one year since I got my present position as Art Director of THE TAMAQUA PAPER, a position that makes this magazine possible. But March also means Spring and Spring means PITTCON. And that's one of the nicest parts of Spring.

For those of you that are new: welcome. We do this every other month, six times a year. And we hope that you'll become a permanent subscriber. There's always something in the pages of PITTSBURGH FAN FORUM for everyone. And you don't have to be a member to contribute. We're always glad to look at anything: letters, drawings, reviews, stories, etc. So, become a part of PITTSBURGH FAN FORUM.

We finally have a Letters section this issue, and I'm afraid we're off to a rather shaky start. I react rather severely to some things. One of them is insults. Insulting is a fine art. And I would never insult anyone I don't personally know. That's a cardinal rule. Insulting someone you don't know is like shooting at a target that isn't there. How can you do it justice?

Besides...the attitude of the letter writer in question is an attitude that at times seems prevalent in fandom. It's a shame, but true. And it gives fandom a bad name. My reply to the first letter pretty well sums up how I feel about this type of attitude. How do you feel?

Letters are appreciated, and always read. Not all letters can or will be printed, tho, and some that will will have to be edited.

Let's all hope that the resurgence in the DICK TRACY daily and Sunday strip, caused by the new creative team of Gould, Fletcher, and Collins helps the strip in sales. God knows it's already helped in content. The first story featuring Angeltop, the daughter of Flattop, and the son of the Brow, was great. TRACY is one of my favorite strips, but over the last ten years it was one of the worst being done. This change is certainly welcome. If you stopped reading it over the last few years, start again. It's worth it.

This issue is dedicated to Kay...for no special reason besides that it's four years there, too.

Enjoy PITTCON.

GARY

Publishorial

"I simply cannot sell them."

"I didn't put any effort into this because I strongly disapprove of gambling."

Our final tally on the 50-50 raffle was 425 for the club. Most people did a good job, but there were a lot of people who did not. There were also a lot of excuses like the above and quite a few people waited until the last minute to return their unsold tickets.

Had they returned them sooner, we could have sold them or at least some of them.

For next year, we propose:

Each individual will be asked to sell 20 tickets.

We will ask you not to return any.

You can turn in 10 tickets from the 20 providing you do so one month after you receive them.

Until someone comes up with a better way, we will be using this method of helping to raise money for Pittcon. So...let's all get to together and pull. Why should just a few people carry everyone? It's OUR con...let's act like it.

Ben Pondexter

Letters

Dear Gary:

I think that PFF 34 was the first issue I'd seen, and I thought it was quite impressive for a clubzine. Not even The Comics Journal uses real type. I'm afraid I thought most of the columns too short and superficial. It's hard enough to say anything substantial in one page, but these concatenations of short paragraphs on different subjects are practically bound to be worthless.

Who cares, for example, if Ben Pondexter (who's probably the first to read this letter: I like to tackle the hard ones) has always hated war movies? If Ben gave some kind of critique along with his conclusion...a critique of plots, dialogue, acting, camerawork, color, and so on...then I might pay attention. Ben doesn't though, and neither do I. I'd be hard put to name an older, more tired criticism than his complaint about American critics being too easy on foreign films, too hard on American. "I hate what they've done to today's Movie magazines," he says. "If anyone knows a good one, please tell me." I can name three good ones: Film Comment, Film Culture, and Film Quarterly. I wouldn't recommend them to Ben, though; frankly, I imagine they're over

his head (although that could be rectified if he opened his mind). Ben might call me a psedo-intellectual snob or somesuch.

The main reason I bought this 'zine however, was to look at Mark Lerer's article "Comics are not movies, damn it!" I completely agree about many of his points. Too bad I can't send you a copy of Gobs no. 3 (distributed with NYAPA 13, Jan. '74), where I made much the same argument as Mark does to Neal Pozner. There are a couple of things in "Movies are not," however, that rub me the wrong way.

First, there's the question of what comics are particulary good for. Mark's description of Kirby's world is quite excellent in my opinion...the best Kirby criticism (at least on the art side) I've read in a LONG time. Yet I am not convinced that Mark really is discussing more than Kirby's drawing (as opposed to Kirby's use of the comics medium). IS the animator prevented from distorting perspective? I don't see how.

Take a look at Dr. Caligari, sometime. Or Son of Frankenstein. Neither of those was even animated! The viewer's sense of TIME, than, is something I've always supposed the film-maker had much more control over then the comic book artist. There's no way in the world Jack Kirby can prevent anyone from reading his comics backwards, or reading only half the words, or skipping every other page, and so on. As long as movies, on the other hand, are distributed primarily via movie theatres (as opposed, for example, to home video tapes), it's not hard at all for Ralph Bakshi to prevent someone from seeing his film backwards, or from skipping words and scenes. Certainly comics artists can INFLUENCE the way readers go through comics; how they do so is surely a fertile field for comic art criticisms. But comic artists DO have less influence in that regard than directors.

Secondly, and more importantly, I don't care for the way Mark pontificates. "It's a shame many fans do not realize this"...cripes, it's not a FACT Mark's talking about (subject to "realization"), it's an aesthetic interpretation (subject merely to agreement or disagreement). I would be offended, if I believed comics and film were alike. This kind of supercilious put-down would make me less likely to change my mind.

Besides, I do not believe that most fans do consider comics and film as equvalents (more precisely: comics and storyboards). Judging from the vast majority of comics reviews, which concentrate heavily on plot, somewhat less on characterization, most fans appear to equate comics whith SHORT STORIES. How many reviews has he seen that concentrate on visual angles, cutting, compositon, or other "film" techniques? I sure haven't seen many.

There's what Mark should be doing: writing reviews that do concentrate on what makes the medium unique. We can argue to doomsday, as the saying goes, about theory, without settling anything important. The proof is in the pudding, as another saying goes. Always. Mark's theory that comics and film are not equivalent will be accepted as valid if and only if it's clear that interpreting comics from the theoretical standpoint illuminates more than does interpreting comics from the standpoint that comics and film are eqivalent. Let's get going on that interpreting, OK?

In my opinion, Mark has some excellent equipment for interpreting comics. His idea about the possibilities inherent in panel division could be very interesting, and needs exploration. Let it be in detailed criticisms of specific comics. I also like his belief in the artist as the comics AUTEUR (if you'll allow me to borrow from the terminology of film criticism...inevitable, I fear, since film criticism is so much more developed). For example, he credits Bernie Krigstein, not Al Feldstein, for what's distinguished about Master Race, Harvey Kurtzman's organization of panels, not his plot, for what's distinguished about Corpse on the Imjin. I'm looking forward to seeing the

application of his theory to, as I've said, specific comics.

By the way, would Mark like to join an apa? I'd love to see our type take over NYAPA.

Oh...every fan is invited to join NYAPA. Write CM Charles Spanier, 52 Seneca St., Staten Island, New York, 10310 for information.

(Mr. Melchert went on for another page describing his stationary and why he uses favorite comics pages xeroxes to write his letters on. He also examined each page, telling us about his like and dislikes. Because of space limitations, and bad xeroxes, I cannot reproduce the three pages here. Without the pages it would be ridiculous to publish his remarks.)

Christopher Melchert
212 North Alfred St.
Alexandria, Va.
22314

(There's a scene in Annie Hall in which Woody Allen and Diane Keaton are arguing in a theatre line. Behind them stands a man talking about movies. Slowly we hear more of him and less of Allen and Keaton. When he starts to talk about Marshal McLuhan, Allen produces McLuhan, himself, from behind a poster to show the man what a pompous ass he really is. I regret that due to deadlines I do not have the time to send this to Ben and Mark for their answer, and I don't have them behind a poster. But I will answer for them.

Chris, I agree with you about 34's columns and articles being "much too short and superficial". It's something I've been trying to get away from. The issue you picked up was only my second as editor, Mark Lerer being editor for the 32 issues before that. But for the most part, short articles were a trademark of the old PFF. The only real long articles were the many fine pieces by Mark himself.

As for who cares if Ben likes War movies or not, I do. I respect Ben and his opinions. I too have always hated war movies. End of statement. When you're dealing with an entire genre of film, you don't need any qualifying statements. Maybe you wanted Ben to run through an entire history of War movies, discussing the camera angles in each, all the plots, acting, color, etc. Come on. Either you like a type of film, or you don't. I don't like war movies and I'm not too fond of westerns either. There are no particular reasons. We're talking tastes here..."aesthetic interpretations", if you will..."subject merely to agreement or disagreement". Pardon me if I pontificate.

I know of a good film magazine or two myself and far and away the best one is American Film put out by the American Film Institute. Film Comment deals too much with foreign films. And I don't like foreign films. Ben is right. Rex Reed's column in the Sunday Daily News last week, praised two foreign films, and ripped apart Gray Lady Down. Granted G. L. D. probably deserved to be ripped apart. But America still turns out the best movies, in my opinion, as the saying goes. Always. And even tho that criticism may be old and tired it certainly is true.

As for Ben's style of writing...it can best be described as "train of thought", as Mark and myself and anyone who has had to type up his copy can tell you. Sure, "concatenations of short paragraphs on different subjects are practically bound to be worthless". Although that could be rectified if you opened your mind.

I'm sure you'll hear from Mark soon, whether it be through these pages or in a more personal vein, remains to be seen. However I would like to comment on a few of the things you said.

Firstly, an animator cannot distort perspective and get away with it like a comic artist can. Now I'm talking human perspective here, the body in motion, as I'm sure Mark is. Kirby or any artist can get away with it for one very simple reason: he's dealing with ONE panel, one drawing. There is no actual movement, only an illusion of movement. The animator must show the entire movement. If it looks awkward or out of perspective, people are going to notice it much easier. The animator has to deal with making movement look as real as possible. Kirby doesn't.

A film-maker has about as much control over time as a comic book artist. How do most films show the passage of time? By pages falling off a calendar, by seasons changing, by running datelines across the bottom of the screen. A comic artist can't do the same? Bullshit.

Granted there's no way in the world Kirby

can keep me from reading his work backwards. By the same token there's no way Lucas or Bakshi can keep me from walking out of the theatre. If I stop reading a comic midway for the pupose of going to get something to eat, does the comic read on without me? If I do the same thing in a movie theatre does the projectionist stop the movie until I get back with my candy bar? Come on. What you're saying is assinine.

Secondly...following your secondly...I don't think Mark pontificates. I've know Mark for four years now and never once has he come off as pompous. And as for supercilious put-downs, you seem to have the market cornered there. Your letter starts off with one so great ("...frankly I imagine they're over his head...") that I find myself wondering what your age is. Couple that with your "I like to tackle the hard ones" remark and one gets a pretty clear picture of your mentality.

As for your statement about the comics artist being the "auteur" of the comic, I can see you'll get an argument there, not only from me, but also from Mark. Comics are a collaborative medium. There's no two ways about it. Krigstein might be the guiding force behind Master Race, but Feldstein wrote the original story. Which came first the chicken or the egg? Either way you can't have one without the other.

In conclusion, Christopher, I can honestly say that you are NOT a psedo-intellectual snob. You are, however, a pompous ass. And may you stand behind Woody Allen and Diane Keaton in a movie line.

Hope to hear from you soon.)

Dear Gary:

No. 35 has to be the best PFF yet. For one thing it was consistently literate. The Classics article was nice. I'd read most of it in other places but never put all together like that. I would take issue with Mike that the Marvel Classics art is not up to the CI standard. CI had its share of "dog" art, believe me. I own enough and have handled enough Classics original art to vouch for that. Marvel DOES tell a much better story. They aren't locked into 4 panels to the page as the later Classics seemed to be and the whole thing flows much more smoothly.

This is, though, a minor point to disagree on. Definitely encourage much more articles like this. It put some meat into the book.

The other articles were good, too...well written and with enough substance to make inclusion worthwhile.

Graphically, the issues get better and better. The smaller type works well but I'm particularly glad to see several type sizes. More flexibility never hurt. The zine has now achieved that level which is so hard to reach: it is good fannish material without being sloppy or amateurish. Hopefully, the quality of the writing will improve as word gets around that good articles, etc. will not be lost among the bad.

Tom Hegeman
44 Maple St.
Oneonta, N.Y.
13820

(I had a hard time convincing Tom to let me publish this letter. As you well know, Tom Hegeman has been a regular contributor to PFF for quite a while. As such he doesn't feel that any of his letters should be published.

PFF is in a very peculiar spot here. Being essentially a club bulletin, practically every reader/contributor is a club member. I cringe at the thought of Murray Bishoff writing a letter of comment to Alan Light. Likewise Howard Siegel to James Van Hise. This kind of backslapping really irks me. (No offense meant to the above-listed people, just using them as an example). But every letter I get is from a club member or a potential club member. Do I stop running letters? I feel Tom had some important things to say...especially his comment on the Marvel Classics. You, the readers decide. Letters from non-contributors/non-club members only? Or should I just run every letter I get?)

ST The Menomonee Falls Gazette

35¢ JULY 10, 1972 No. 30

AMERICA'S GREATEST COMIC WEEKLY

Complimentary Sample Copy to attendees of the

Secret Agent Corrigan

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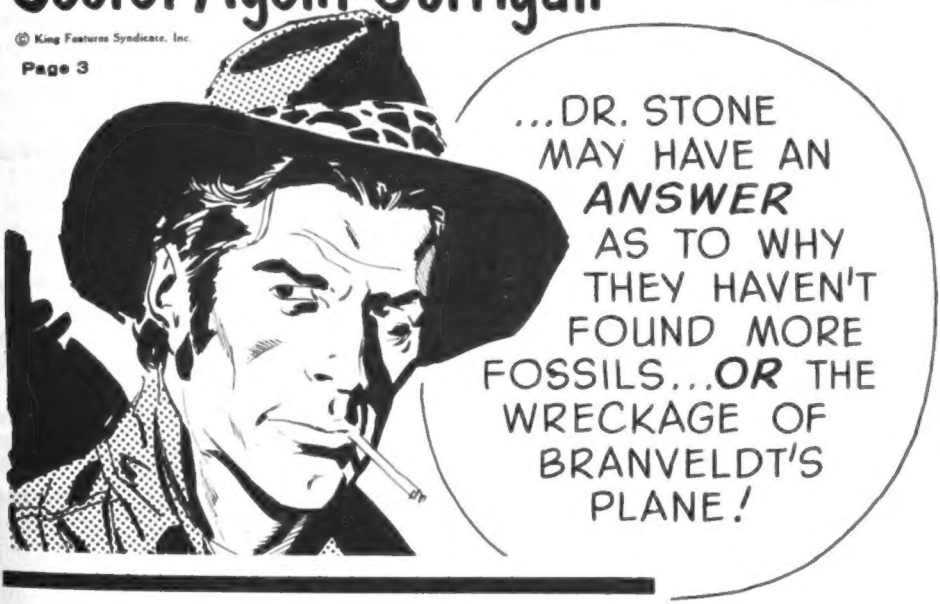
Page 3



by Mark Lerer (with Ben Pondexter)

An interview with Street Enterprises (Jerry Sinkovec, Mike Tiefenbacher, and David Finger)

Al Williamson 11-12

This is an interview I had decided NOT to run. But for various reasons, (the main one being someone missed a deadline), you're going to see it anyway.

When Mark Lerer left for Princeton, and I took over his post as editor of PFF, I was sent a huge envelope of backlogged material. Some of it...most of it...I have since used. (By typesetting I can get far more to a page then Mark ever could.) Some of it I threw away.

Two pieces that have lingered in my files ever since are interviews. One of them is with Gil Kane. It seems a little obsolete now, after reading THE COMICS JOURNAL's excellent interview with him. The other is the piece you are about to read, an interview with Jerry Sinkovec and Mike Tiefenbacher (with Dave Finger sitting in). Collectively they are known as Street Enterprises. (And this is how they will be referred to in the interview.)

Fandom has seemed to be getting into the habit of running old interviews. THE COMICS JOURNAL's interview with Paul Levitz was conducted in two sessions: one dating back to a Creation Con in 1976, the other as recent as December 31, 1977. Street's THE COMIC READER recently reprinted an interview with Don McGregor from 1974. (It was the first time in the U. S. though, having come from England's COMICS MEDIA.) In fact with the exception of THE COMICS JOURNAL, there seems to be a rather long gestation period for all interviews.

This interview was conducted in 1975 by Mark Lerer at the New York Comic Art Convention. A lot of what you read will seem dated. But Street is a subject that has never been interviewed before. As such the interview is very interesting.

Again...for the protection of those being interviewed here, this is three years old. Keep that in mind...

●●●

ML: First question of course is how did ST start?

ST Well, pavement came...How did ST start? I'm sure Mike would be glad to explain that...I think I explained it last year.

In about 1970 I wrote a letter to RBCC and for some strange and weird reason he called me up the day after he got the issue...well, he was publishing this fanzine called COMICS CONQUERY at the time and we collaborated on that for awhile...until one summer afternoon we were going down to the convention in Chicago and he told me this crazy idea he had about publishing a comics strip newspaper. And I told him he was a loony.

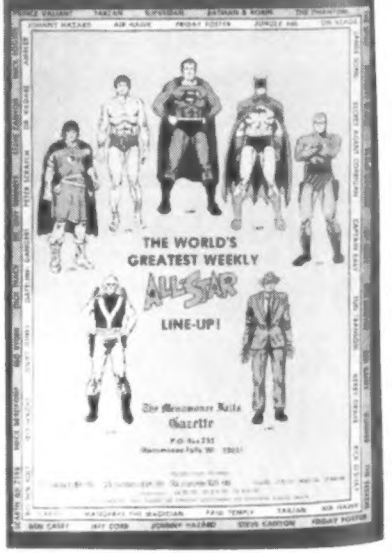
Your opinion hasn't changed.

That's true. But I told him it would never work, but he didn't listen...and eventually he decided that we would start and when he asked me who would be the publisher...I said ST because it's what I used at first on a strip I drew for a comics commentary, it was just a little ST in the corner of the thing...like a street sign...and I guess that's how it began.

ML After a while of course, you realized that it did work and the GAZETTE has become, if not the only, then one of the leading stripzines, followed by the GUARDIAN.

Now that's another point. You people seem to have not a monopoly but a control. You publish the leading stripzines, you circulate all the major independents and some undergrounds and things...

ST Hardly, only the undergrounds we carry are basically comic book oriented.



The more or less overground underground...

ML The independents. So with your competition so apparently little...first of all IS your competition as small as it seems?

ST I don't think we have any competition.

If you break it down we don't.

If you go over the entire magazine field...well, in actuality there is no competition.

ML So, you're a monopoly in what you do?

ST Well, we're the only one providing the particular service that we do.

ML Why do you call it a service?

ST Well it certainly isn't a businees right now. A non-profit service. It certainly is non-profit.

ML Has it always been on this basis, non-profit, or is it that you're just doing badlly right now?

ST No, it never was profitable. It was always a break-even proposition. We do publish a profitable magazine, THE COMIC READER, which makes huge profits, but it's all eaten up by the two other magazines. The reason we got TCR in the first place was because they thought we were the most dependable people for the job. Well, we keep the schedule...we missed one month in the early issues since we lost the reporter.

ML So, if you have no competition, what is it that guarantees this dependability?

ST It's people...it's mostly pride I'd say.

ML In essence what keeps it going?

ST Desperation, greed...no, not greed...greed in the sense that we don't want to do anything else. Actually we don't want to go out and get real jobs. This is currently supporting us, we make our living off it. If you call it a living.

Eke out an existence. I believe that's the term.

Well you're really comfortable in your ekking.

So you haven't been able to go to Florida once.

I'd say the reason we come out every week is because it's routine to come out every week. There is nothing really special about staying on schedule, status quo...

ML How often does TCR come out?

ST Bi-monthly.

The GUARDIAN comes out weekly. Very weakly.

Ben Pondexter May I say something?

ML Certainly.

BP I thought you came out weekly because you liked coming out weekly.

ST We come out weekly because we said we would.

BP I've been reading your stuff for an awfully long time now and I always thought you liked what you were doing.

ST Well, that's why we do it. If we didn't it would be stupid to do it at all.

BP I think it would show.

ST I think we had a couple of examples of where it showed.

BP Not in your magazines.

ST I still maintain the main reason we remain weekly is that we would fall behind and there would be no way to catch up and it would make things much harder.

It's the only logical way to do it. That's why we put it out weekly.

Another reason is if we didn't come out weekly we would lose our second class mailing privileges. It would cost us more to mail.

ML You're basically going to continue doing these three books? Nothing in particular is planned?

ST No new magazines.

The Portfolio.

The Portfolio is a special project to attempt to recoup what we have lost on the first two special projects.

ML What were some of the abortive...?

ST We tried a competing newspaper against THE BUYER'S GUIDE which lasted two issues and failed mainly because we had a faulty mailing list and we bought the MARVELMANIA mailing list for a ridiculous amount of money and it was mostly worthless.

The reason it was so worthless was because it was over two years old when we got it. And there were so many address corrections and they had sold it to three other people. Also it was a 14,000 name mailing list once we collated all the wrong names off and the amount of time it takes to adjust 14,000 copies is not conductive to mailing it out

on a regular basis. Especially when you've got only two people working on it.

ML Do you think you would have gotten anyplace or would TBG just have been too much?

ST TBG was established and right now I don't think there is any purpose, any real purpose served by THE NOSTALGIA JOURNAL or THE JOURNAL, either one of them. And I think their page count shows it. Say what you will about Alan Light. He is doing the best job in producing an adzine for fandom at the right cost and I think the page count and frequency of the current weekly status proves it.

ML The type of stuff you do...just publishing the strips...it's not what you'd normally call creative work. Or do you consider doing...any of these things, including TCR, creative?

ST In the beginning THE GAZETTE and THE GUARDIAN could not be considered creative, since all we did was choose what strips would go in. But soon after we started we realized we couldn't keep reprinting articles in the column space that we had left and we eventually had to seek out people who could fill the columns with worthwhile reading. I think we probably got some of the best writers in Fandom...some of the best continuing columns.

ML But that's not what sells the zine.

ST It's not what sells the zine to everybody. I'm sure it's a contributing factor to some people. If the strips were the only reason for people to continue, I don't think we would keep all our subscribers. But the columns are a major factor and some people continue. A couple of weeks ago we got a renewal...it wasn't a renewal...a guy who had a GUARDIAN subscription sent in for a subscription to the GAZETTE and said the GUARDIAN doesn't have any columns and he wants the GAZETTE because it gotta have columns. The GUARDIAN doesn't sell anywhere near what the GAZETTE sells and it's partly because of what's in it. The GUARDIAN's line-up has some major weak spots but I do think the fact that we don't have any time to fill up the columns with reading material has something to do with it. Maybe not much...but enough to make a difference.

ML Okay. I also want to mention that in a recent editorial in TCR you said that you had very litttle room to do anything but straight news and I think that the quote was "we would like to keep it that way" and you felt that the commentary and such things did not belong in that zine.

ST Well, that's a hedge on our part since we like to protect our news sources. If I did in TCR what I used to do in the GAZETTE, I'd alienate 50% of our cute news sources and that wouldn't do much good for our circulation. I do it anyway...

You get reprimanded for it too.

The problem is with material like that, David (Finger) goes to the offices and gets yelled at.

I think you do it less than you used to. You used to do it once an issue.

He's mellowing in his old age.

We weren't handling TCR when I was doing that.

He goes out and commits murder to relieve his frustrations. It's the comic critic genocide in you.

ML From what you mentioned before, TCR, your latest project, is becoming your most profitable.

ST We can't say we're very responsible for its initial success. I mean we did inherit a very healthy publication, but I think we have raised it to new heights of glory. We have improved it.

ML How much has it grown circulation wise and otherwise since you took it over?

ST Well, I was talking to Alan, n Paul Kupperberg today, and he said th circulation when they had it was 360 or something. Well, it's now 4200 o 4400.

ML Why has it grown with ST?

Well, we picked up dealers wh handeled the GAZETTE and th GUARDIAN.

ML Is it the ST reputation?

ST It could be that. I think it's now lot of new comic shops have opened i the last few years and the comic sho

market has at least grown since Paul had it. So in that respect I think that we maintained what circulation he had and perhaps added to it. The reasons for the addition perhaps can be traced to some of the innovations we added such as: we have expanded most of the departments. We have twice as many comics to report on, just from the two major companies. And we have more cover reproductions and we have more companies to cover. We also have our pocket checklist, which a lot of people really appreciate.

There are so many departments added because ST Enterprises is a whole. All of our comics or most of them are picked up by me when I go into town once a week and I never know if he has got it already and since we both buy everything including the reprints and stuff we were getting a lot of duplicates and I said I need a checklist.

So I put it in there for my own use.

ML TCR is probably the publication that gets the most work put into it.

ST I wouldn't say that.

I'd say it might be second, but it may be third, too. We probably put in, between Jerry and I, excluding mailing and addressing and that part of it, probably only put in four or five days a month in TCR. Whereas with the GAZETTE it's a whole week job even if we do TCR the same week, we have the GAZETTE every week, and it takes all week. I mean we don't pick up all the pages and we're responsible for what it looks like down to the plate making stages, which we have no control over.

ML Is this extra work simply because of the frequencies? I mean, if TCR, the GAZETTE, and the GUARDIAN were all monthlies which would get the most time put into it?

ST I still think the GAZETTE would probably be more. There are more pages, they're larger pages and there is a lot more work to put into certain pages of the GAZETTE. Some strips are paste ups from clipped newspaper strips and we fill in all the black areas. I mean the entire thing. You go over it with a Flair and that takes maybe two and a half hours to do. I don't take anywhere near that time to TCR.

ML Okay, with TCR you found that you needed an extra person, David Finger.

ST We always had an extra person. Well, when we first inherited TCR, Paul Kupperberg, who is Paul Levitz's assistant, was handling the news and he decided he was going to go to school or something or for some reason he would not have enough time and that left us with absolutely no one to gather the news. So I think that the next month Jerry went to New York and spent too much money and too much time to gather the news and fly back to Milwaukee. In the meantime Dave Finger had written us and told us he would be willing to take TCR off our hands seeing as how we were having trouble putting it together and getting it out on time. We weren't willing to give up TCR, not just yet, but we did need someone to go to New York and gather the news. Not knowing any of his qualifications, I urged Jerry to call him up and he did. David Finger agreed to go to NYC and gather the news. Now the first time he went to DC I understand they thought he was Bill Finger's son, and that might have opened some doors, I don't know.

It opened some doors until they found out who I wasn't and then they closed them all.

Eventually he managed to, in his own brash, obnoxious way, win himself into the hearts of all but certain members of the staff.

ML How much of the zine is from Finger's work? Is it simply news, you have no editorial powers?

ST I would say he has no editorial power. He does have partial power in that he can leave out anything he wants. We have no choice in the matter. If he decides not to tell us something. We don't know.

ML You don't do news from all the companies, right?

ST I do DC, Marvel, Warren, Continutity, National Lampoon and Atlas til it died. We gather Charlton and Gold Key over the phone, but Gold Key is just data, no news.

It is not feasible for him to travel to Derby in a sleigh to find Charlton and set up contacts. Charlton is such a small operation. I mean not counting staff members, it's probably a two man operation. Nick Cardy and George Walden handle all the books, I mean editorially. Joe Gill is a staff writer, he stays there. Among those three people, they write everything and they handle everything other than the minor freelance stuff.

ML When you expanded your coverage you tried to get news from MAD and met with some difficulty. What happened there?

ST Well, Jerry DeFuccio has been getting the articles in the GAZETTE from the start and he's a good friend. When we decided to expand our coverage we contacted him and asked if he could provide us with some news tidbits every month and maybe the contents of their coming issues.

That was partially an idea of mine since I always had a desire to go up to the MAD offices. That's why we did

NATIONAL LAMPOON because I wanted to go up there. And he provided us with some news and some cover repros and also a listing of future movies to be satirized. Now there is the problem. Since he listed the future movies to be satirized, Bill Gaines saw it and decide they would be endangering themselves to lawsuits from the various companies who would be satirized in future issues. Now confidentially, I don't believe it because most companies love having their movies satirized because it means free publicity for the film.

Well, what do you say the reason was?

I don't really know. It's hard to tell.

What do you mean, reason? Bill Gaines runs his empire in strange ways.

One other thing that was mentioned in the letter was something about the MAD special we ran was the first one that cost a dollar. You said the MAD special will feature such and such and will cost a dollar and he didn't like the announcing that the price would go up.

Well, he's a very sensitive person I think. They don't need our help. We just wanted to do it to remain complete.

We've been trying to break them open again. Especially cover stats on the issue about to be released. I don't see how that could harm anyone. I think the problem was we ran a cover stat that was too far ahead for Gaines liking.

ML In TCR over the past six months, you seem to be constantly adding something new. You recently expanded the page count and added new departments. Are you going to let it settle now or are you going to keep adding?

ST The page count was my idea, mainly because we were receiving advertising and we were having to stall it because we didn't have the room to run it. And the money was nice to. Also we had to change the quality of the paper because the price of paper went up 300% or some ridiculous number like that and the paper we're now using cost exactly what the old paper was and there is no comparison in quality. Obviously when someone got a new

TCR in the lighter paper they'd realize that this was much lighter and much more flimsy looking. In order to sort of bypass that we added eight more pages and hoped they wouldn't notice. I mean they will notice, but at least they won't be mad at us. Most of the eight pages are taken for the advertising. The last two issues have only been six or seven pages but with the advertising we used to have one or two.

BP The first issue that I got, the only thing I like about it was it gave Mike a little room to play. Like with the Marvel reprints, he always had a cute little thing to say about them that I always found amusing.

ML What about disturbing mail? Do you get any regular mail on TCR?

ST Yeah, threats. That's from quite a few syndicates.

ML Outside of the people you do business with.

ST We get nasty letters from RICHIE RICH fans asking why we didn't mention...

We do not. That's a lie.

I would probably say that less than

10% of all the mail we get on TCR is in any way anti-whatever-we're-doing.

ML I mean Letters of Comment.

ST We get people appreciating whatever we've added in the latest issue. Rarely do we get the kind of criticism you would expect. Like "I thought the cover on the last issue was rotten" or something. We do run into problems where people don't understand the news and we have no control over what they tell us. If there is an error in logic, there is a certain problem with the fact that we cannot print exactly what we want. I mean sometimes we wish to get into a reason for something, a reason that was cancelled, or a reason that this feature is not going to appear, and we can't because of politics. We understand that, but we don't exactly like it. It's something we got to live with.

ML Is politics a big problem with that zine?

ST It pops up. It only works its way into the thing when we go back and ask other questions and they say you shouldn't say that. If they want a reason why a book has been cancelled.

There is only one reason why a book is cancelled.

Well, that's what we are always told. A book is cancelled because of poor sales, and I'm willing to believe that. I mean there is no other logical reason to cancel a book. But occassionally we do get ego problems among the company executives and the employees. I'm really not that interested in it; I'm not interested in reporting it, I'm not interested in spreading around anyone's relationship with their employer. I mean it is really none of my business telling other people. I don't really look at TCR as a journalistic device rather than an information device.

ML More of a TV GUIDE than a TIME.

ST When prior to the time we took it over, that's always what I though of TCR as ultimately being. It's sort of a TV GUIDE of comic books. It can't reach into the industry as much as TV GUIDE may.

We don't have Cleveland Amory.

But we do have David Finger.

We don't have a review column. We don't have a crossword puzzle. Bob Rozakis can do one for us.

ML Also you don't have editorials or commentaries.

ST We don't have full color photos either.

ML You don't have millions in circulation either.

ST Rather weak-kneed, I'd say. Unless it's a safe subject.

The only time editorial opinion comes into TCR is in our Letter from the Editors column, which is something else we inherited from Paul. It usually starts with information as to why we are doing something. And if it does eventually get into commenting on a current scene it is usually only an observation. It isn't an editorial.

ML Do the readers seem interested in commentaries or haven't you gotten much mail response on that particular thing?

ST Unless we have face to face confrontations with people, they usually don't bring up the editorial.

ML So it's complete objectivity?

ST It's supposed to be complete objectivity. I can't claim that we're completely objective because no one is completely objective. We try and it helps to be filtered through another person, I mean this is not things I get from going to the offices and having them talk to me, it's having it capsulized by David and than reading it and that way I think it is almos impossible to come out with a really grating, biting remark against someone. It does happen, but it's never an intentional jab at either company.

ML I get the feeling from knowing what I do David goes through his monthly routine of getting news from the companies that you people print what you are told to print.

ST It is not so much what we are told to print as what we can print. It's more like he goes to the office and finds out a lot of information, writes it all down and we get to print whatever he writes down except when they take a little blue pencil and cross things out.

Paul Levitz started the idea of I'll-let-

35¢ The Menomonee Falls Gazette JULY 10

Issue 1, Number 30 THE INTERNATIONAL NEWSPAPER FOR COMIC ART FANS June 26 - July 1

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMICS

Edgar Rice Burroughs' Tarzan by Russ Manning

by Edgar Rice Burroughs
WHO ARE YOU TO GIVE US ORDERS, LAK—!
CURSED BEAST! YOU SHOULD BE IF I HAD SOME WAY TO DO IT YOUR CARCASS JUST GET THE WOMAN OUT OF HERE—!!
HE KNOW G'LAK. SOMETIMES REMEMBER.
IN HERE— THE SAME WAY YOU CAME IT EXITS BEYOND THE CITY WALLS
WE GIVE YOU CONTROL OF THIS CITY AND ALL THERE IS IN IT IF YOU GET RID OF THE CLOUD-THAT-CARRIES-CANNONS-IN-ITS BELLY!
I KNOW!! HURRY!!! HER LOYAL GUARDS ARE COMING
GET RID OF MY WEAPONS— QUICKLY!!
GUARDS! THE OUTLANDER TARZAN KIDNAPPED OUR EMPRESS— HE SURPRISED ME... KNOCKED ME DOWN... AND GRABBED HER
HE TOOK HER UP INTO HIS CLOUD-THAT-CARRIES-CANNONS!
STOP FOOLS! DON'T ANGER THEM— HER CANNONS WOULD SMASH THIS CITY AND ALL OF US— TO DUST!
LET TARZAN HAVE THE EMPRESS! WE DON'T NEED HER! I CAN KEEP THE SAGOTHS OUT OF OUR CITY
BUT TARZAN ISN'T IN THE U-220— AS ROAS IS WELL AWARE!
DON'T SEE TARZAN AT ANY OF THE PALACE MUGAMBI—
GIVE HIM THE CAPTAIN—
ROAS PASS
HE SIGNALED BY NOW
SOMETHING'S WRONG!
THE HE-COPTER CAPTAIN—?
RIGHT AND HURRY MUGAMBI—!
ALONE IN THE ROYAL PALACE OF SAR GENERAL ROAS SMILES
ROAG EMPEROR OF SAR! HA-AA! SOUNDS GREAT! BUT SOMEHOW
THE MAN-CARRYING DRAGON-FLY DROPPING OUT OF THE CANNON-CLOUD! COMING AFTER TARZAN?!?
I'VE GOT TO MOVE HIS BODY OUT OF THE GARDEN— FAST!
WHA—? IT'S GONE!!!

you-blue-pencil-my-work-if-you-let-us-print-cover-stats and that has been their thing.

Now I don't follow this because in many cases the stuff they cross out doesn't come to pass anyway.

And people would be upset if they hear it.

It's ocassionally rumored or just planned and if we did put it in, I don't think it would help.

Let me say something. Tony Isabella is going to laugh if he ever reads this. I don't know how long I'd been there, but Tony turns to me and says: "We're bringing back NIGHT NURSE as a NIGHTSTALKER type character with a script by me, art by Rusty." And I wrote that and Len Wein was editing at the time and he said: "I don't believe it. You actually made up a story." And that thing would have gone through if they hadn't checked it out.

So I'm glad that they do look it over. At least because it's not a vindictive thing. They don't say I think this is a great news item and you can't print it. Sometimes they do. We do run into the thing with DC where they want to announce it first in their fanzine and I can understand that.

ML When their fanzine first came out you had a little problem there...

ST It was more of a communications gap.

It was more of a distinct dislike for us.

Well, there are some higher-ups who don't really understand what's going on. They're more business men than communicators, I'd say. We don't talk in numbers. As fans we're a very small part of their buying public and they can't be bothered with us. I mean if we cause any problems then we're the first thing to go. We don't pay anybody's way. There are many people, though, in the same companies who feel the opposite. In fact, they came from fandom, even back to Julius Schwartz, who was a fan to begin with. There is sympathy there and that's probably how we got into DC. That's partially why it opened. The next month we had an initial about it and David couldn't get any news for that month. All we could do was just put a little blurb, an explanation for it. I thought it was best to be honest and tell them what happened. The same people who had taken the news away got a little mad at that. But through the efforts of Paul Levitz they managed to open it up for us.

Paul has always helped. It was his zine to begin with.

ML Do you find that you're patronized?

ST Define that.

ML In the sense that you have this thing that they can "blue pencil" your copy in exchange for cover repros. Do you find that the people you go to like to have a definite control over what you print?

ST Well, for obvious reasons. Comics is a business. They don't want to print things like that. Marvel doesn't print news items that come out in six months, so DC can rush to get something together and get the copyright out beforehand or vice versa.

I think it's perfectly obvious what's happened in the past two months with the various competing projects of the same type.

With certain things you can take your time. Like Marvel was not rushing HOWARD THE DUCK because they didn't see DC running out to do a HOWARD THE DUCK story.

And I think that's the way it should always be. Well, I think it's important that we consider that unlike the opinions of INSIDE COMICS, these are business men and not politicians and as they're not elected officials, but their own corporate officials, we really don't have any say so in their politics. They may be political in the way they deal with things, but they're not politicians.

ML In cases where judgement has to be exercised as to what gets printed and what doesn't, is it you people who do the judging or is it the companies?

ST Ocassionally we do print things they tell us not to print. We ultimately get hassled for it, but in the long run it never turns out to be detrimental. I

mean when someone else has announced something that we're told not to announce, I don't think it hurts them not to have their correct story released, especially when we have facts that the original people who blew the cover on the story got wrong.

Sometimes the people I deal with forget what they've told me. Sometimes they debate on whether it's okay to say it. But these things never get into print. A lot of stuff they cross out.

ML So there is more sweat than what we think and it's not as easy as it looks.

ST It's a lot of fun. The most pleasure I get out of it is reading the news before anybody else. That's the best part.

I did used to like going to the newsstand and seeing something new that I never knew was going to be there.

BP It's like Howard Bender said, it's like working for the company. Some of the bloom goes off the rose. You can't have it both ways.

ML You people were talking about if somebody else prints something. But you also said before that you have almost no competition.

ST It's not competition as much as it is people overlapping, that's what it is. Don and Maggie Thompson, who are friends of ours, write a column of total rumors and they say it's rumors. They don't have to depend on anybody and so they can print it the way they hear it. Now in some instances it's good they do that because they release information that the companies aren't ready to release and probably won't have released for maybe two or three more months.

And then when it's released the companies go and change their plans.

Once the cover on something has been blown they get edgy and they change things.

ML When you say overlapping...

ST Don and Maggie are not there to provide the service we provide. And neither is Jim Steranko. We give a capsule rundown of every major comic book and a lot of people use that as to why they're buying this particular issue. None of them do that. We also make sure that 90% of all the comics that are coming out are known to be coming out so you can look for them. Nobody else does that.

Some comics would be discontinued, and you'd never know it was the last issue. What I'm saying is if you had to depend on MEDIASCENE for all your news you'd be very, very confused. They might get the peaks and valleys for the news but they don't go in for the nuts and bolts of it like we do. I mean, they're not the type of peiople who report that THE RENO KID has been revived with re-reprints.

We got our last friendly smile from Steranko didn't we?

ML Also MEDIASCENE is a general sort of newsstand multi-media magazine.

ST Well, with Steranko you got one source and with us you got another source. Even if you had both of them you don't feel like you were reading the same news twice. I think it only helps us that he prints news the way he does.

BP I think you're right. I think in this case two sources are better than one.

ST It also provides us with a rumor list.

ML Just what do you mean? This is authorized news.

ST This is news they have made sure is correct. The companies will cross out something they don't want printed. Or if something is wrong they correct it so that we don't make mistakes.

Mark Hanerfield and the period from 1967 to 1970 was replete with many incidents of comics and projects that never existed even in the minds of the executives. Some did but never got beyond the planning stages.

Back then it was mostly a guy would go up to the offices and say "Hi what are you doing?", and the guy would say "Uh, we're doing this." and he wouldn't realize he was putting him on.

I remember there was going to be a 256 page follow-up to THE BIG ALL-AMERICAN COMICS book and that never materialized. There was a long thing in Mark Hanerfield's TCR where Tower was going to purchase ACG or vice versa. I can't remember the thing. After that never occured, it was going to be DC buying ADVENTURES

INTO THE UNKNOWN, just the title and continuing the numbering for some reason. And then he changed that and it was going to be UNKNOWN WORLDS, which is another ACG title and that never happened. I wasn't reading this as it came out, so I can't say how swept up everybody was that was in it. Reading it in retrospect it's humorous. And I don't want to seem humorous when people read TCR.

One thing in our TCR...when Atlas got started, we got reports from a number of sources that they had purchased the rights to the Tower characters. And we kept holding off reporting it because we couldn't get an official confirmation. It eventually never came up.

An official confirmation says "We are doing this and you can print it.".

ML What about the future. What can we expect outside of what is going on now?

ST For TCR I plan to expand a little section in the thing that started last issue where I would attempt to explain some of the nuts and bolts parts of the industry. Last time I listed all the comics that were currently being published. I had other projects in mind. In all started with the printing of the circulation figures a long time ago as worthless as they might be.

ML Mike (Tiefenbacher), it sounds like you're the more creative part of this combination. Are you the one who thinks up most of the new ideas and projects?

ST I would not think that he creates everything. The idea part is mutual.

We talk it over, it often gets to the point where we don't know whose idea it was. I've always been fascinated by numbers and lists and things like that. That's the way a lot of the long, involved things get into print. But one thing he doesn't do is write much. Most of his stuff is in the business end and he may be the idea person but he doesn't get into the exact creative side.

ML There is something behind the titles of publisher and editor?

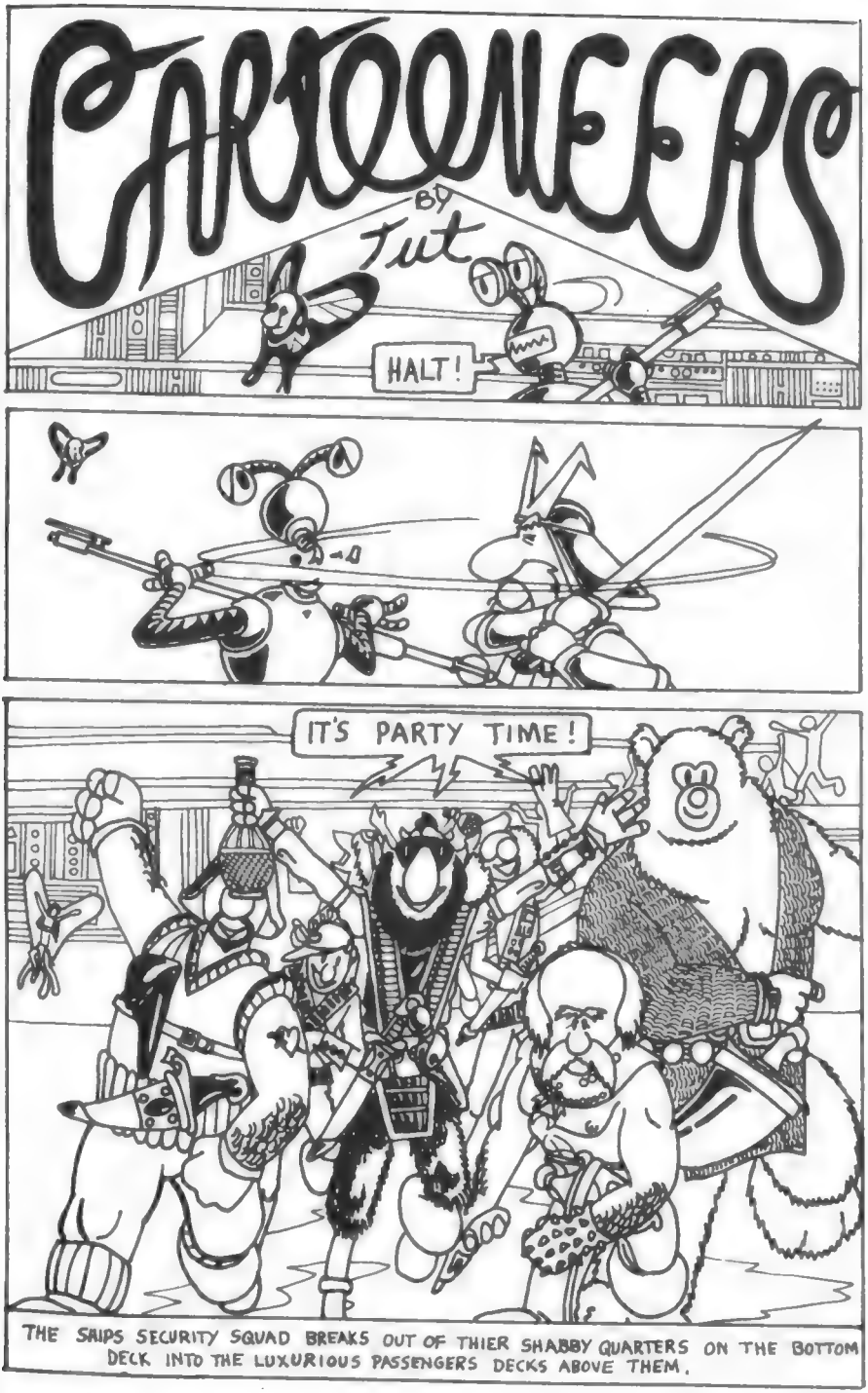
ST Well, I always thought he was more of a managing editor than an editor.

Those are better terms that big cheese and little cheese.

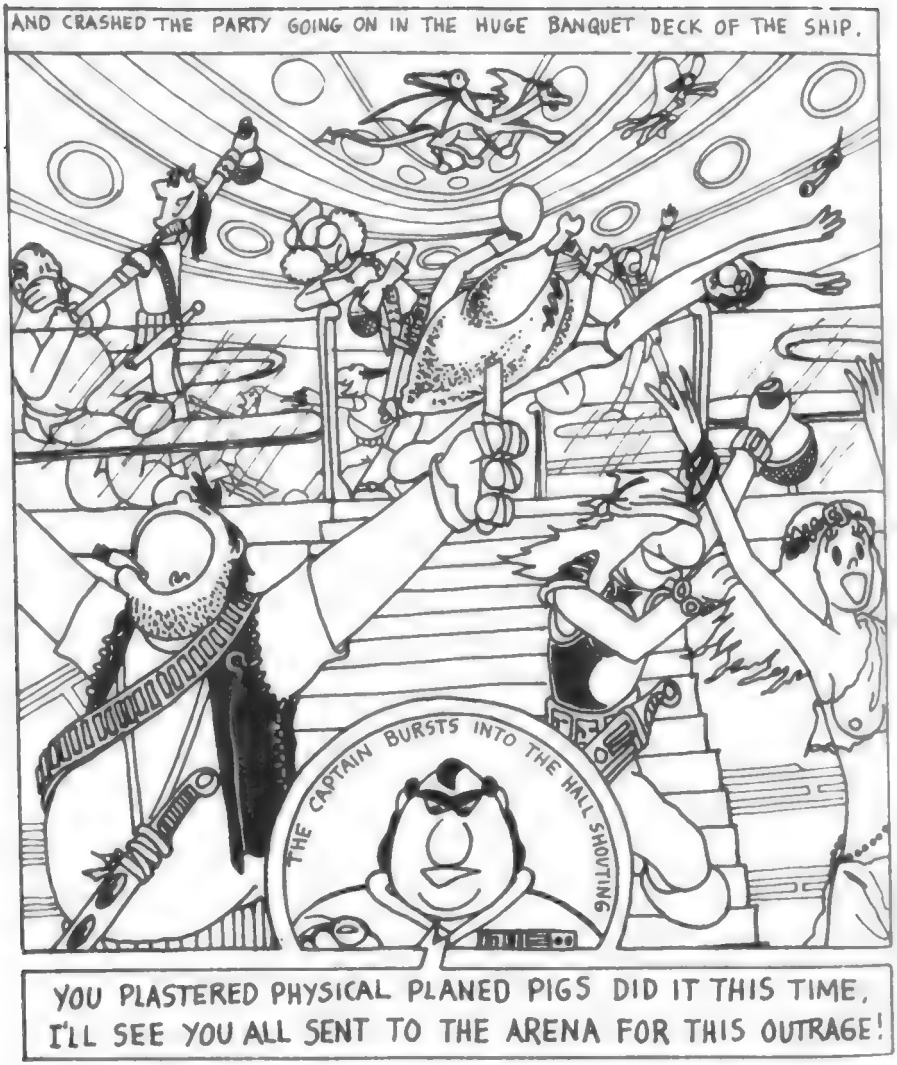
AFTERWORD

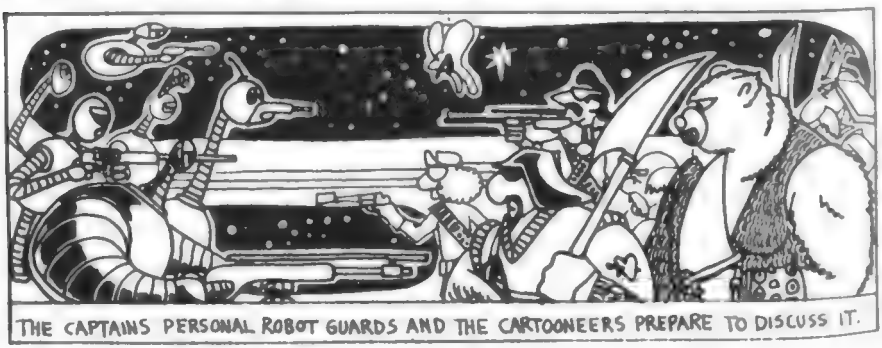
There you have it. A little dated perhaps, but still interesting. The bulk of this interview concerned itself with THE COMIC READER, that august little magazine that has been in fandom in one form or another since the beginning. It has never been better than it is now. The current issue, Number 155, sits in front of me now, and the magazine has improved with age. Over the past three years, Sinkovec and Tiefenbacher have added such feaures as interviews, fanzine reviews, the Mailboat, a comment by Andy Hildebrand, and Media News by the mysterious, but always enjoyable, Rona Blabbit.TCR covers all the companies from Marvel and DC down through Archie, Harvey (or Richie Rich), Warren, Gold Key, and even Byron Preiss Visual Publications. It recently added four-color front and back covers.

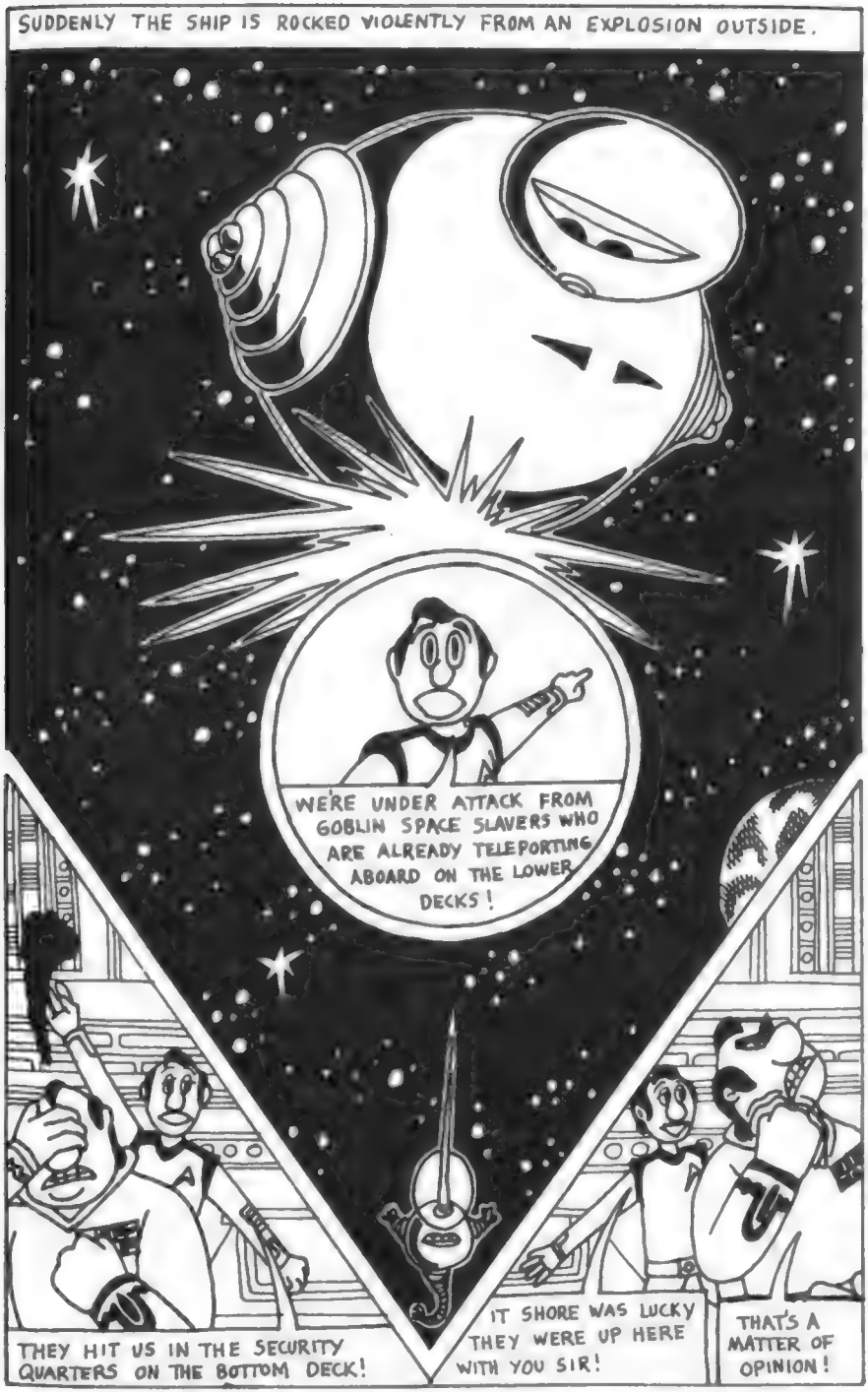
Despit what you read in the interview TCR IS the TV GUIDE of the comic industry. It fulfills the same purpose: a guide to the upcoming "programs" with interesting and informative articles added.

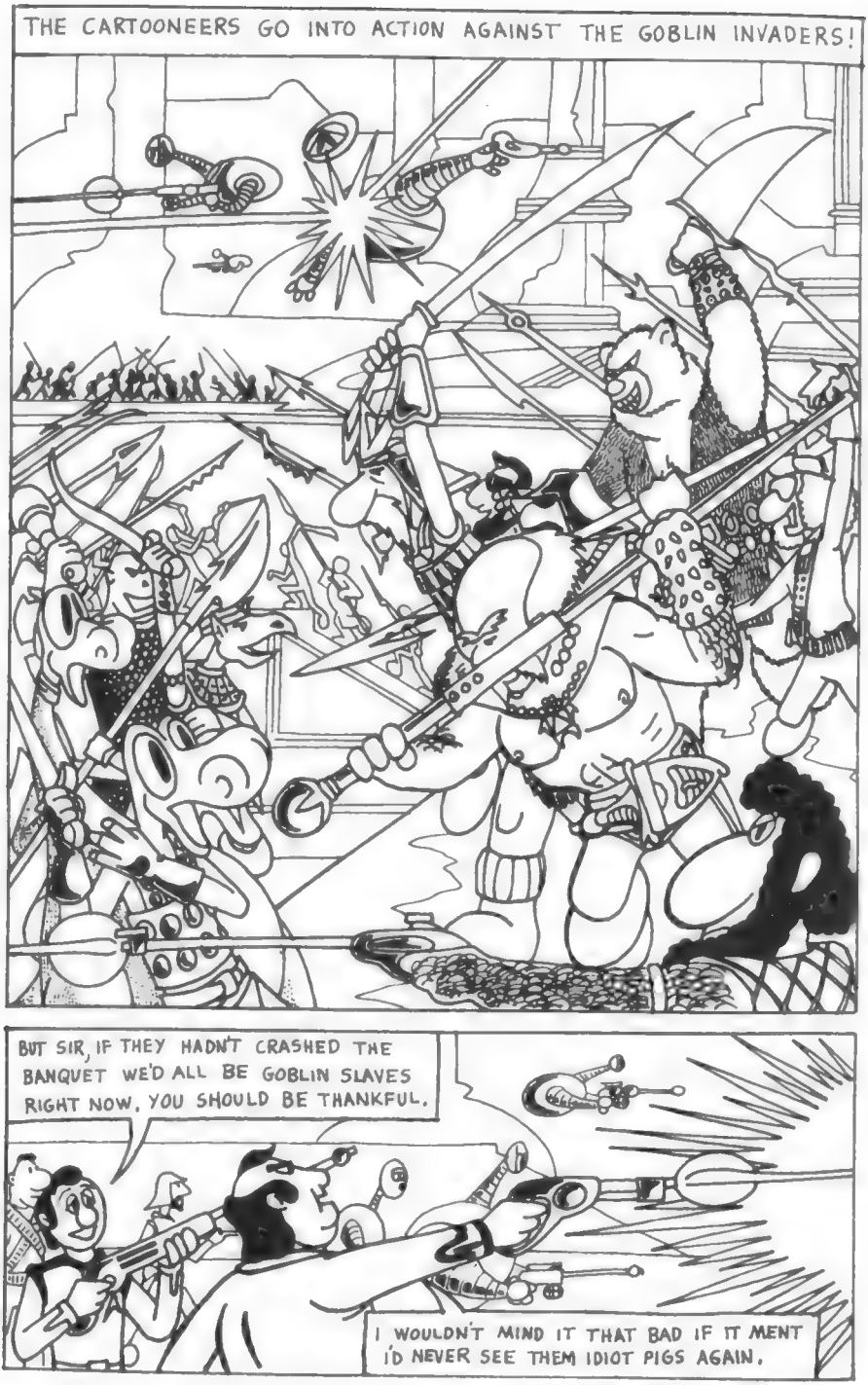


THE SAIPS SECURITY SQUAD BREAKS OUT OF THIER SHABBY QUARTERS ON THE BOTTOM DECK INTO THE LUXURIOUS PASSENGERS DECKS ABOVE THEM.


AND CRASHED THE PARTY GOING ON IN THE HUGE BANQUET DECK OF THE SHIP.
THE CAPTAIN BURSTS INTO THE HALL SHOUTING
YOU PLASTERED PHYSICAL PLANED PIGS DID IT THIS TIME, I'LL SEE YOU ALL SENT TO THE ARENA FOR THIS OUTRAGE!


THE CAPTAINS PERSONAL ROBOT GUARDS AND THE CARTOONEERS PREPARE TO DISCUSS IT.


SUDDENLY THE SHIP IS ROCKED VIOLENTLY FROM AN EXPLOSION OUTSIDE.
WE'RE UNDER ATTACK FROM GOBLIN SPACE SLAVERS WHO ARE ALREADY TELEPORTING ABOARD ON THE LOWER DECKS!
THEY HIT US IN THE SECURITY QUARTERS ON THE BOTTOM DECK!
IT SHORE WAS LUCKY THEY WERE UP HERE WITH YOU SIR!
THAT'S A MATTER OF OPINION!


THE CARTOONEERS GO INTO ACTION AGAINST THE GOBLIN INVADERS!
BUT SIR, IF THEY HADN'T CRASHED THE BANQUET WE'D ALL BE GOBLIN SLAVES RIGHT NOW. YOU SHOULD BE THANKFUL.
I WOULDN'T MIND IT THAT BAD IF IT MENT I'D NEVER SEE THEM IDIOT PIGS AGAIN.

TO BE CONTINUED

By Howard Siegel

As Siegel sees it

The Honeymoon Is Over

Now that I've gone international, my writing for the the British fanzine BEMUSING gives me entree' to the fandom scene in that English speaking nation and environment. Although English fans skipped several decades of American comic book material, have small knowledge of our Golden Age and are first doing the things that U. S. fans participated in long ago, they nevertheless are enthusiastic and knowledgable. They have been weened on, or more accurately, force fed, Marvel until their craws can no longer digest the things we became disgusted with ten years ago. The title is apropos to the situation. The failure of a super hero created specifically for them, Captain Britain, after a short career bespeaks for the failure of Stan Lee to change his modus operandi when catering to a different audience. The same two-parter with Spider-man appearing in the U. S. is C. B.'s swan song in Super Spider-man no. 247 in England. That, in case you are curious, is the reason for the two panel origin explanation appearing in Marvel Team-up no. 65. Perhaps the best way of making the point is to quote British fans:

"...two new Marvel Weeklies, THE COMPLETE FANTASTIC FOUR is reprinting stories, moving them out of SUPER SPIDER-MAN. This makes room for Thor. RAMPAGE has long Defender tales with half a Nova installment in the back. I'd have thought Marvel could have done a lot better...I hope they try again, some time."

"I noticed from the reactions of subscribers to BEM that American Comics, Marvels in particular, are getting more and more slagged, and British Comics more and more praised...quite rightly so!"

"...it's a wretch to lose comics such as Swamp-Thing and Man-Thing and have to endure page after page of constant fighting between the equally strong goodies and baddies. Whatever happened to the 'ripping yarn' we first enjoyed when Marvel hit the corner kiosks and book shops?"

It goes on and on. Even though the packaging is different over there, Marvel hasn't seen fit to retrench from losing a lucrative British market. Such giveaway as can be had in many of the weeklies do not make up for the rote material English fans seem to have grown tired of much faster than their American counterparts did semesters ago. A Captain Britain boomerang or paperboard mask found in issues 1 and 2 of his magazine were little compensation for an origin story that came out of the Hulk-Captain Marvel-Nova mold with just the name and costume changed. The biggest thing over there are the newspaper-like products whose themes are based upon American televisions and movies. Judge Dredd, a take-off on Logan's Run; a version of the Six Million Dollar Man; a black soccer player extaordinaire, etc. Those are the characters that have replaced the Marvel stable.

I have not touched on DC's success, or lack of until now, because as usual they play their part low key. With stars such as Superman and Batman, long famous there, DC had an obvious advantage. And thanks to Mike Gold-like publicity given freely and with dispatch to fanzine editors, DC is supplying them with ready made material to fill their pages. Being more discreet with what they send over, the month-to-month material is varied. One would think that someone at the DC offices is

SHEEESHH! YOU TALK ABOUT CASES OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY - EVER SINCE "STAR WARS" CAME OUT, PEOPLE KEEP ASKING ME IF THAT REALLY WAS JAMES EARL JONES DOING MY VOICE!!!
BILLARELLI '77

carefully overseeing the marketplace, for the stories are not necessarily following the same publication sequence as ours do. Particularly favored at this time is Teen Titans, Legion of Super-Heores, and the Superman/Batman family.

Panelology...
It breeds eggheads that drive cartoonists crazy!

"Hey Ben! Did you see that Prince Valiant original behind the book counter? It's got a $1200.00 price tag on it!"

"Forget that nonsense. I brought you here to get some culture. There's a Roy Crane Sunday page in the next room that contains none of his famous Ben Day application. What a rarity!"

That brief conversation explains the difference between a PCC member and the average MUSEUM OF CARTOON ART visitor. And quite frankly, the staff still hasn't gotten used to the former. Although they're easy to pick out from the crowd, any of them noticed heading toward a curator brings shudders to the intended victim. Even in its third year of existence, the Museum and it's household family haven't quite digested the fact that for years a formalized "fandom" exists which devotes itself to the cartoon strip. The belief was that anyone comparing the brush and ink strokes, reading the handwritten instructions on the margins, examining the balance of lights and darks of a strip, was either a contemporary cartoonist, production printer, or editorial script writer. For a layman to be so expert was unthinkable...until the panelologists came. Back in the early days of the Museum's Greenwich, Conn. period, the news media was local in nature, the crowds were either school classes, families enjoying a Sunday outing, or a bunch of "groupies" like myself and the other New York area specialists. We weren't harmful, because most of us had helped put the Museum together, contributed collections or assisted in the curating of certain exhibits. It was

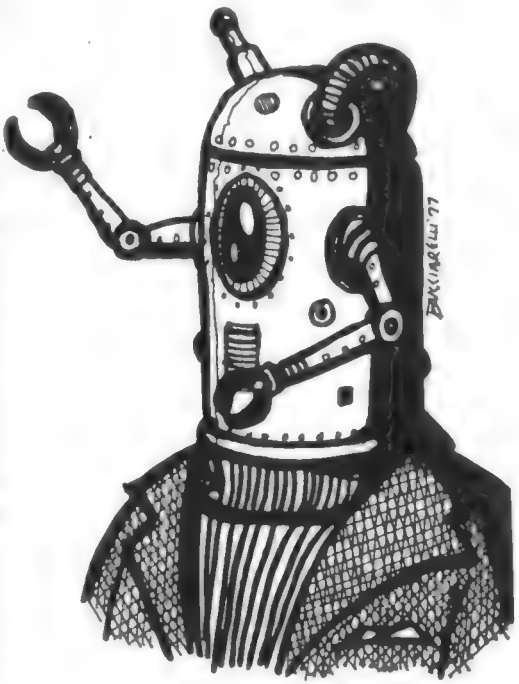
when the long distance fans started to trickle in that the difficulties began. Let's assume that they are members of the PCC...

It is not unusual for Gentle Ben's boys and girls to assume that the finding of errors is a challenge that must be answered. And they often do. The consequence of such a discovery is to forcefully remind the people at the Museum of the artist's infallability. The reward is a sense of oneupmanship on the master. In the suggestion box oft times comes startling offerings. Once a panelologist noticed the similarity in appearance between Bill (MAD) Gaines and Dik (Hagar the Horrible) Browne as he appeared on the cover of the first INKLINGS (the Museum's quarterly publication) and insisted that a large picture of both grace a prominent spot above the contribution box as indicative of what prosperity can do to an artist. Another tried to sell as having historical importance a piece of art which contained nothing but Jules Feifer's forgery of Will Eisner's signature, a momento of the former's first job as a cartoonist.

During the month of February this year, the "First Sunday" speaker was Burne Hogarth. Now to most Tarzan followers and students of the comic strip in general, Hogarth's contributions are noteworty and have received nuch "ink" over the years in various news media and fanzines. This was to be his umptieth lecture on the same subject. He long ago cast aside the script. Constant use has burned the salient points into his memory banks. Evidentally it did the same to a small group of panelologists. As Burne recited his script, he was being echoed, verbatum at times, by the aforementioned culprits. We later learned that each had been to at least six of his presentations before. We also learned that Hogarth never deviates from his down-pat routine.

Every once in a while I clean out my comic book collection due to lack of closet space. After four or five prunings, some good stuff is discarded. Well, not exactly. They're put up for sale at the Museum, with the proceeds going toward the maintanence and operation of the building. My one mistake the first time was not to tell the staff about pricing, or how to handle the sales. That was on a Sunday. On the following Monday Igot an excited, glee-filled call from Brian Walker. "Man, you should have seen the mob we had at the book counter buying up those comics. We sold all 200 of them in twenty minutes!" I later found out they were all put up for 50¢ each, and 1960's Challengers of the Unknown, Metal Men, Doom Patrol, Thor, Tales of Suspense, and Tales to Astonish were indicative of what the lot contained. The "mob" was made up of collectors who had a field day. The sale was meant for nice, honest folks. "Never trust a panelologist at a rummage sale", I later instructed our group.

Once in a while a visitor of PCC fiber can be a pleasnt chap to have around. Maurice Horn, that self-proclaimed expert whose ability to mesmerize his publishers while shilling falsehoods as gospel and historical accuracy, was a



visitor. He was collecting notes for a forthcoming book on the western comic strips. Unfortunately for him, he was recognized. I believe the only time we had to forcibly eject a visitor was a result of the confrontation that followed. Mr. Horn was the recipient of a barrage of insults, accusations (all of them true in my estimation) and threats. The subject was his recently published misnomer THE WORLD ENCYLOPEDIA OF COMIC ART. I rooted for the other guy. He looked like the Iceman...or was it Dr. Mid-nite? Either way he was articulate, skinny, and has the only copy of the Trigan Empire Annual on the eastern seaboard.

The anecdotes abound. Bill Hoest, that clever young man who offers us Loretta and Leroy Lockhorn and Agatha Crumm, once pulled up on a motorcycle with a luscious blonde riding tailback. Mort Walker and Jack Tippit, respectively the President and Director of the Museum, will often pitch putt on the front lawn, using, when in season, the giant chestnuts that fall from the ancient tree facing the front portico. A particularly long shot once hit Bob Dunn (They'll Do It Every Time) as he was walking up the winding road. The traditional cartoonists' humor came through as he ran the rest of the way shouting "The sky is falling! The sky is falling!" in his best Henny-Penny style. Several entering visitors became frightened. And you thought such things happened only at PCC meetings...

by Tom Hegeman

Comics and the Courts Part 2: Man of Steel vs. Men of Steal

The year is 1938. It isn't really such an exceptional year. The Depression has not yet ended, World War II has not yet begun. But America will never be the same for this was the year that SUPERMAN burst on the scene.

SUPERMAN was a success and like all successes, he spent his share of time in court. When you are successful, you are either suing or being sued. And SUPERMAN (or rather, the men behind him) did both. A complete

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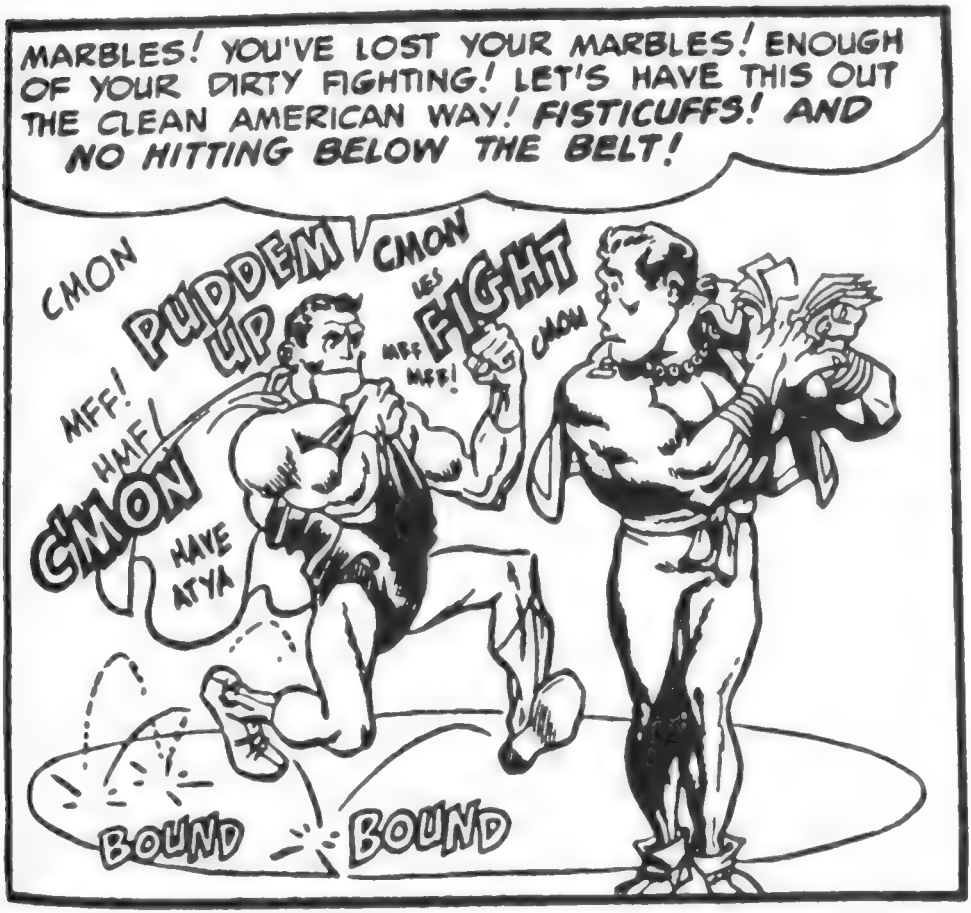

history of all of SUPERMAN's litigation would probably fill a book. We are only going to look at a couple of cases dealing with copyrights and see what we can glean from them.

The first test came in 1939 in a case called Detective Comics v. Bruns Publications, Inc. SUPERMAN had been in existence only a year but it was already a huge success. Success breeds imitation. Bruns (which was soon to be known as Fox) put out their first issue of WONDER COMICS which featured WONDERMAN by Will Eisner. DC took them to court and won.

The judge states that he has read all the magazines in question and refers to comparision tables drawn up by DC and states that "short of 'Chinese copies' of the plaintiff's SUPERMAN strip, the defendant could hardly have gone further than it did".

It was pointed out that each was a man of miraculous strength, that each had a secret identitiy, that the only difference between the costumes was SUPERMAN's was blue and WONDERMAN's was red.

Both had been pictured running toward a full moon and crushing a gun in his hands, repelling bullets or shells, ripping open doors, etc.

More importantly the court rejected the argument that SUPERMAN was only a current day Hercules. The court noted that SUPERMAN portrayed more than a general type of character and had an original arrangement of incidents and pictorial and literary form. It could and had been copyrighted. As such they could be infringed and Bruns had done so.

Having not seen a copy of WONDER COMICS, I haven't formed my own opinions of the decision. I very much suspect that today we would look at the comic and a half dozen more egregious examples would come to mind. But you have to keep this case in context.

Comics were new. A success like SUPERMAN was both new and unexpected. DC wanted to keep the success going. But who knew how long comics would last? In another year the whole field might be shot to hell. So hang in there, get all you can out of it and fight off the other guys. WONDERMAN just had the misfortune to be the first one to come down the pike.

It couldn't go on like that though. There were just too many heroes, too fast. DC pulled in its guns. From now on it would be more selective in its targets.

"The defendant Fox Publications, Inc. (formerly known as Bruns Publications, Inc.) does not seem to have profited by its experience in the case of Detective Comics, Inc. v. Bruns Publications, Inc." With these opening words in 1941, Judge Bright laid low the careers of the LYNX and BLACKIE THE MYSTERY BOY. Basing his opinion on the law as set forth in DC v. Bruns, the judge found a "deliberate copying by the defendant (Fox) of drawings and cartoons of the BATMAN and his companion ROBIN" as contained in certain issues of DETECTIVE COMICS. No elaboration. It seems that Darknight Detectives can be as dangerous as Men of Steel. It also looked like somebody at DC didn't like somebody at Fox. In any event this was the last little case of any importance (I include it here principally because of the great opening line). The next and last great case is the biggie...the battle between the Big Red S and the Big Red Cheese.

The actual suit against Fawcett was started in late 1941. It dragged on until 1948 before coming to trial. An opinion was handed down in 1950 which was appealed. The final decision was handed down in 1952. DC, incidently, lost the case originally, but a new trial was granted on appeal.

By the time of trial, DC had a lot of money invested in SUPERMAN. There was ACTION and SUPERMAN comics and there was the SUPERMAN comic strip. Although the case is officially known and cited as National Comics Publications v. Fawcett Publications, it should be noted that DC

was at the same time suing Republic Pictures for the CAPTAIN MARVEL serial they had produced.

So just what did the judge find at the trial? Well, for one thing, he found that the "SUPERMAN character and strips are clearly original". He based this opinion on the case of Detective Comics v. Bruns Publications.

Copying is another question. Here the judge's opinion is interesting:

"The evidence as to actual copying is conflicting. Plaintiff called some of the employees of Fawcett just referred to. They testified to instructions from their superiors to imitate the SUPERMAN strips and the dialogue and script as closely as possible, and that they did so. Fawcett called the superiors, who denied having given any such instructions and denied any copying. An independent artict testified to admissions by C. C. Beck, Fawcett's chief artist, who drew the first CAPTAIN MARVEL cartoons as to his having copied SUPERMAN. Beck, however, denied making any such admissions. Experts were called by both parties, who contradicted each other as to the significance of claimed similarities and dissimilarities between the portrayals of the two characters, their facial appearances, costumes, etc., and the superhuman feats performed by them. It would serve no useful purpose to recite in detail the conflicting testimony, for I am satisfied from all the evidence that there was actual copying."

The judge then listed the reasons he was convinced there was copying.

"Both CAPTAIN MARVEL and SUPERMAN have the same athletic physique. Both have substantially the same clean-cut faces. Both wear the conventional regalia of the gymnast or circus acrobat-skin-tight uniforms, boots, and a cape which is used in flying. The only real difference is in the color of their costumes, SUPERMAN's being blue and CAPTAIN MARVEL's red. The incredible feats, performed by both, such as leaping great distances, flying through the air, exhibitions of marvelous strength and speed, and imperviousness to bullets, shells, explosions, knives and poisons, are identical, and the settings in which the feats are performed are often closely similiar. Substantially all of the feats performed by SUPERMAN are later duplicated by CAPTAIN MARVEL. Identical phrases, expressions and dialogues are frequently found in the panels.

SUPERMAN is represented as a normal human being, a meek newspaper reporter wearing eye glasses (Clark Kent), who, by throwing off his regular clothes, appears in his athletic costume and becomes a superhuman being and performs superhuman feats in the interests of justice and to overthrow evil. CAPTAIN MARVEL is likewise represented as a normal human being, a radio reporter (Billy Batson), who, by uttering the magic word "Shazam", is transformed into a superhuman being, and, in that capacity, also performs superhuman feats in the interests of justice and to overthrow evil. There are villains in both stories, mad scientists who resemble each other in appearance, and who, by similiar devices and methods, attempt to dispose of the hero (SUPERMAN or CAPTAIN MARVEL), so that they can execute their plans of destruction without molestation.

The stories depicted in the respective panels are much the same, as, for example, the experiences of both Clark Kent and Billy Batson in applying for jobs as reporters,

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being turned down, and finally being accepted as the result of having performed the same superhuman feat. In other instances they are different. For example, there is no romantic element in the CAPTAIN MARVEL stories, such as Lois Lane, the girl reporter, who is a permanent member of the SUPERMAN cast; nor do the SUPERMAN stories have an ever-present evil enemy of the hero, like Sivana."

Had this been the only question at issue, DC would have won it then and there. But Fawcett had a few tricks up their sleeve. They contended that there had been improper copyrighting and that copyright protection was therefore abandoned.

The arguments here get rather technical but they are basically these:

The newspaper strips were not properly copyrighted for the most part. Often the copyright symbol or wording did not appear on many strips.

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"There were sixty-seven different SUPERMAN stories published in the monthly issues of ACTION COMICS from June 1938 to December 1943 (the only ones in evidence). During approximately the same period, i. e., from January 1939 to December 1943, there were published daily, without proper copyright notices, in many of at least 160 newspapers throughout the United States, numerous stories portraying SUPERMAN and all of his superhuman feats, closely paralleling the stories published in ACTION COMICS. The number of issues of the newspapers carrying these stories literally ran into the thousands.

It is quite true that the syndicated newspaper stories were not identical with the ACTION COMICS stories, but they were so nearly similiar that, IF THEY HAD BEEN PUBLISHED BY A STRANGER, THEY WOULD CLEARLY BE HELD TO BE INFRINGEMENTS OF THE COPYRIGHTS ON THE ACTION COMICS STORIES.* If a copyright owner authorizes or permits the republication of its copyrighted material without copyright protection, it forfeits, i. e., abandons the copyright. I think the same result must certainly follow in the present case, where Detective has permitted publication in newspapers, without copyright protection, of stories which were the same in all material respects as its own copyrighted stories."

Therefore, although Fawcett may have copied the character, it could legally do so since there was no copyright on him.

DC, to put it mildly, was not satisfied with this result. They appealed.

The case was heard by the Federal Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, a court whose scholarship and influence are often considered to be second only to the Supreme Court of the United States. The opinion was written by Judge Learned Hand (honest, that was his real name), one of the more brilliant judges to sit on the bench, often called "the tenth member of the Supreme Court" because of the influence and solid reasoning of his decisions. Judge Hand did not agree with the trial judge. His opinion granted a new trial and guaranteed that that trial would be long, complicated, and costly.

*** EMPHASIS ADDED.**

The opinion gets quite technical. It agreed with the trial judge that there was deliberate copying. "It takes scarcely more than a glance at corresponding 'strips' of SUPERMAN and CAPTAIN MARVEL to assure the observer that the plagerism was deliberate and unabashed."

But it held also that DC did not abandon the character because some strips lacked proper copyright indicia. It noted that each strip was in effect a seperate "adventure" and must stand or fall on its own merits.

"On the other hand, we did not find WHICH of the strips, which the plaintiff put in suit Fawcett had infringed: i. e., copied so closely as to be actionable under Detective Comics v. Bruns Publications. That will demand a comparison of EACH STRIP put in suit by the plaintiff with Fawcett's strip, which the plaintiff asserts does so closely copy that particular strip. Each such comparison really involves the decision of a seperate claim; there is no escape from it. The plaintiff may put in suit as many strips as it pleases, BUT IT MUST PROVE INFRINGEMENT OF EACH, OR IT WILL LOSE AS TO THAT STRIP.*

***ALL CAPS...EMPHASIS ADDED.**

Whether the strips so copied were protected by a valid copyright we did not say.

In other words, any new trial would have to go to panel by panel, determining who copied what from where and if so was there copyright protection.

The rest is history. Fawcett settled out of court and ceased comics publication. There is evidence that they thought the genre had run its course and they wanted to get out ahead of the game. If so, they were quite astute. The next eight years were not exactly the heyday of the comic book.

But one might ask whether the mere presence of the suit alone was not enough to make them get out. They must have asked themselves whether, even if they won the next trial (and the appeals that were sure to follow), it was worth the financial drain. The Man of Steel may simply have proved to have more endurance than the World's Mightiest Mortal.

And Now, a Word from Our...

ron kienzle

Parallel worlds are a favorite plot device within the DC mythos. But, I have never seen so many stories involving parallel worlds appearing within such a short period of time. In BATMAN FAMILY, the Huntress goes to Earth-I to talk to her father without talking to her father. The JLA comes to Earth-Prime (which I refuse to believe is actually our world). The SECRET SOCIETY OF SUPER-VILLAINS made a wrong turn and arrived on Earth-III, freeing three members of the Crime Syndicate of America. And, stretching a point, in the tabloid size SUPERBOY AND THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES, Superboy visits an alternate future created by the Time Trapper. You just don't know your worlds without a score card.

Reviews

Portia Prinz. Richard Howell-Desperado-Eastern 1977
31½ Robert Rd., Cambridge, Ma., 02138. $1.25 per issue.

Portia Prinz is a creation of Richard Howell and, as stated, is an attempt to realistically show the cultural and personal conflicts resulting from the contact between the modern world and a group ot immortal women living apart from the rest of us on a hidden and virtually unreachable island. Sound familiar? Well, forget it. The Glamazons, as they call themselves, more closely resemble the scion of Oberon of Amber, although not quite so murderous.

Portia Prinz, the main character in the saga, is described as the "World's Formost Pseudo-intellectual Super-heroine". That just about sums it up. The stories are not dramatic; they are not very humorous; and they are not parodies (I'm giving the benefit of the doubt. It would not be a good parody.). So to tell the truth, exactly what it is, I don't know. The art is good, the plot makes sense, and the dialogue isn't bad. Mediocre might be the best word. Sort of like Don Heck art. It's better than bad, but not quite good.

I get the feeling that if the story line was prose only, it would be better. There are some concepts that just do not do well illustrated. This might be one.

Questar
by Bill Wilson. $2.00

$2.50 by mail from William G. Wilson, Jr. 1535 Oneida Dr., Jefferson Borough, Pa., 15025.)

Questar is Bill Wilson's new publication venture. Bill is best known for his previous fanzine The Collector. Those who have read The Collector, especially the later issues, know that Bill Wilson puts out a quality product.

Questar is the self-proclaimed "The NEW Magazine of Science Fiction and Fantasy." It is a thirty-eight page (excluding covers) magazine published on slick paper. The first issue has a tremendous cover by Ken Barr dedicated to STAR WARS. As could be expected, there are a couple of articles on the movie. Nothing new, but both were interesting. The first article went into several proposed SF and fantasy movie projects and discussed the impact that a nation-wide cable television system might have on SF and fantasy projects of this type.

This issue had two prose stories by a William James Reynolds and two graphic stories, one by Steve Ditko. They were enjoyable. The graphic stories were far from enjoyable. Ditko can draw. He cannot write.

The best part of the magazine was Bill Wilson's "...Back through the Looking Glass". The Chesire Cat, who explained that he is not a cat, presented the true picture of the world beyond "the Looking Glass". It is not as much different from ours as we were lead to believe.

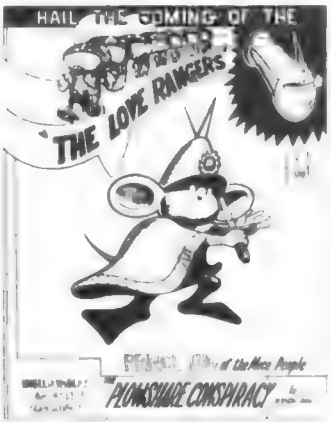
Star Fleet Medical Reference Manual

This is another continuation of the STAR TREK mythos. As far as it goes it is not bad. Unfortunately it goes too far. The description of ESP as a development of a stimulated human aura is not fair. This aura, also known as Kirlian radiation, is caused by the electrical potential of the human body. Whether the skin is wet or dry affects the aura as it is observed.

The Med Manual shares a few astronomical faults with the Techincal Manual. Epsilon Indi, the supposed home star of the Andorians, as well as 61 Cygni, the Tellarites supposed sun, are far too cold for habitable planets, except under very unlikely circumstances and eighth or fifth worlds respectively. The homes of both the Klingons and Gorns are placed far too far away from the sun in the Tech Manual to have names of stars visible to the naked eye as the Med Manual states.

Besides these faults, the book is fairly good. It gives details of Vulcan, Klingon and other humanoids' physiologies are given. A list of medications and illnesses that appeared on the show are given, as well as descriptions of some of the instruments and medical devises used in the show.

For $6.95 it is a little steep, but if you're a Trekkie like me you will probably buy it and like it. I await the Klingon version.



The Love Rangers
by Vernon Grant. $3.00
from Vernon Grant, 131 Putnam Ave., Cambridge, Ma., 02139

The Love Rangers is a black and white graphic art magazine presenting the exploits of "The Love Rangers". These intrepid adventurers travel from their almost planet-sized starship, "Home", to right the wrongs of the

universe with love.

The art is not great, although it does have a lot of charm, in the same sense that Bode' had. The story is only passable, though, and at $3.00 for only 33 pages, we'll leave it up to you. Look at it at a con before you buy it.

FOOM

As we all know (don't we?), FOOM is Marvel's prozine devoted to giving the fans the inside story. Issue 20 is an all Edgar Rice Burroughs issue. The three major articles are about ERB. The first deals with ERB's writings and a short biographical sketch. The other two are interviews with Marv Wolfman and Roy Thomas on their work on John Carter and Tarzan respectively.

The regular Department of InFOOMation has the major writers and editors of Marvel giving their "intentions" of what will happen in the future of their respective books.

The front cover is a Perez and Sinnott collaboration of John Carter of Mars. The back cover is a montage of Tarzan, John Carter and ERB, by some guy named Howard Bender and inked by Alfredo Alcala. The illo looks much better on the inside, reproduced fully. (The back page version is badly colored and cropped.)

I can live without FOOM. It serves a definite pupose in giving fans a look within the hallowed halls of Marvel. For that reason, Marvel fanatics might not be able to live without it.

AFTA

by Bill Dale Marcinko.
99¢ (No. 1), 80¢ (No. 2) from
Bill Dale Marcinko, RPO 5009,
Rutgers University, New Brunswick
N. J., 08903 or from zMay 15-Sept. 1:
47 Crater Ave., Wharton, N.J., 07885

AFTA (Ascension from the Ashes) proves that we should all beware of Rutgers' students. Bill Marcinko starts the issue by explaining his death. It's a gag, of course, but it is a sick gag. The 95 page, offset digest (PFF size) has everything from an interview with George Perez to reviews of fanzines, movies and comics, and a "Sexism and Sonja" article, and a few other things best not talked about.

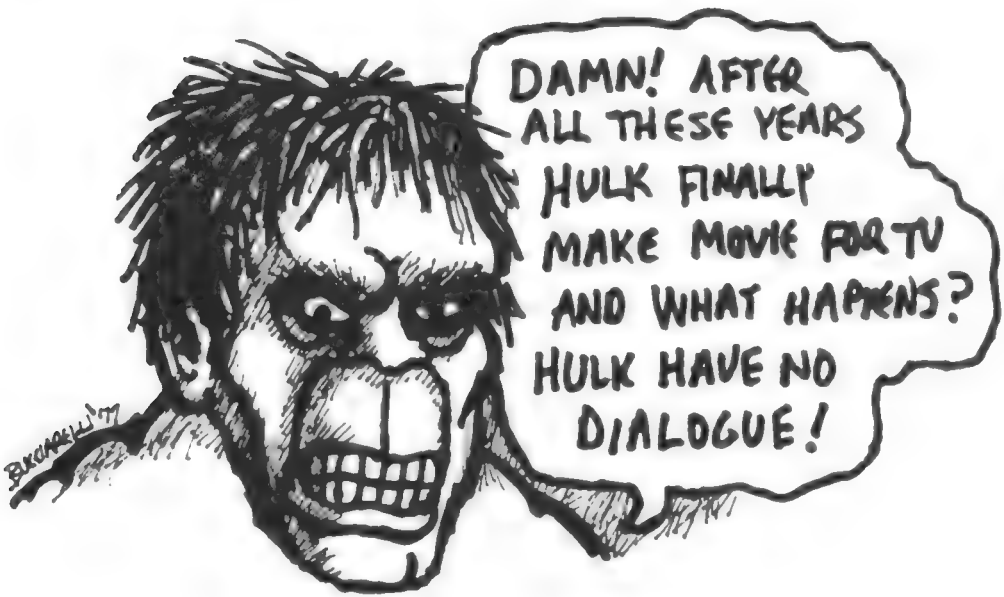
Aside from the interview and the articles mentioned, an interview of those involved in the Red Sonja lookalike contest (which led to the present Red Sonja and the Wizard touring show with Frank Thorne and a group of Sonjas), the rest of the 'zine is nothing to talk about. Actually, a major problem of the thing is that it is not indexed. With an unnumbered number of articles, it is a bit difficult to be sure what is in the thing.

My recommendation: consider buying it. It's big enough to have something to justify your money. As for later issue, your guess is as good as mine.

Before I end my ramblings, I would like to comment on the Pittcon curse. The curse states that wherever we schedule a con will be unavailable to us a few months before the con is scheduled to start. One more time and I recommend we forget the whole thing. This is just not worth it to me. If we go through with a PITTCON '79, why not just invite some pros for a weekend just for the benefit of the club?

ALL AROUND...

by ben pondexter



I loved the fact that THE INCREDIBLE HULK was played straight. The second movie was even better than the first. It is possibly the best use of a comic book character yet. But I wonder if Hollywood will ever let the Hulk get the girl?

If you're high on mystery, science fiction, and adventure, don't pass up RAISE THE TITANTIC! by Clive Cussler. Loved the book.

SOAP is here and the world is still going on. I suspect that lots of people are not watching. I think the whole heart of the matter is that the characters are not very likeable people, so why watch them? I don't think that switching to a mystery format is going to help any.

Usually I enjoy Michael Moorcock books but the Cornelius Chronicle was not one of them. After struggling through one book, I can only say if you can tell me what's going on, feel free to do so.

Look for Howard Bender's credit on the British version of STAR WARS comics. Way to go Howard!

SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER made me realize that today Hollywood is

making movies about sex rather than romance. Now they are merely good. As it was at one time very good.

Nice to see COMIC WORLD back again. This fanzine by Robert Jennings has always had good articles. It's one of the remaining fanzines that tell you about characters and books. Give it a try. Number 15 is now out. Order from: Robert Jennings, RD 2, Whiting Rd., Dudley, Ma., 01570 at a $1.00 a copy.

Jack and Kelly Harris are expecting around April. Jack...we still need a new address on you. All three of you by the time you read this.

Loved the Hulk no. 222. "Feeding Billy" was one of the best issues in long time.

February, 1978 issue of HEAVY METAL has a new adventure o Barbarella. I may have to renew my sub. At last something in the mag I can read. It must be a mistake.

Reading the SHADOW reprints, you find a timeless quality to them. For the most part they might have been written yesterday.

With MAN FROM ATLANTIS cancelled, I wonder what becomes of the comic book...

CLUB NEWS

Left to Right: Ben Pondexter, President PITTSBURGH COMIX CLUB; Greg Eide, owner. EIDE'S SCIENCE FICTION AND COMIX SHOP; Dick Zdinak, and Bob Michelucci, Publisher and Author, respectively, of THE COLLECTORS' GUIDE TO MONSTER MAGAZINES are seen at the PITTSBURGH COMIX CLUB's autograph party upon the publishing of this Pittsburgh-based book, at Eide's shop. Congratulations to both Dick and Bob on the publishing of this fine book.

Meetings held:
December 10, 1977
January 14, 1978
February 11, 1978
and March 11, 1978

We're going to hold off on the Display Case project until we can find someone who can build them cheaply and well.

PITTSBURGH FAN FORUM subs are up now, and we'd like you to renew, and maybe even buy two issues. We will be running a mailing campaign to all letter writers in certain Marvel and DC books and all PITTCON packs will contain a copy of the latest issue, the one you now hold in your hot little hands. Help us make PFF the best clubzine ever. YOU can do it.

Our Anniversary special due out in August already has pages by Howard Siegel and the one and only Trina Robbins. Many other pages have also

cor. .e in. This should be the best Special Edition yet, so climb aboard!

The winner of the 50-50 raffle was Marian Giroux. $425.00 for her, $425.00 for the lub. Congratulations!

Our "Comic Talk" session at the beginning of each meeting came up with the idea of each of us trying to create our own super hero. If you're interested bring your idea to the next club meeting or you corresponding members mail yours into Ben. We would like to have enough so some of our artistically-inclined members can draw them up.

July Con is the one we'll probably be going to this year. If you're interested let us know now. There are two Seuling cons this year; one in New York over July 4th, and one in Philadelphia the weekend after.

The Variety Club Telethon will be held on April 15-16 in Allegheny Center Mall. They have asked us for some members to be in costume at the fishbowl area to meet the public. This is a good chance for us to plug PITTCON as well as help a good cause. In addition to the costume characters, they can use workers behind the scene. If you are interested in this kind of work please contact Ben so you can be on the call list.

There will be a picnic at Jac McGonigle's sometime this summe This will be a PCC special event, and you are interested let us know.

The autograph parties for Bill Wilson' Questar and The Collectors' Guide t Monster Magazines were hug successes. Hopefully we'll have mor such events in the future.

PITTCON. Hang on to your hats...here we go.

We'll be at Northway Mall April 28 29, and 30. There will be a special Clu Preview on Thursday, April 27 at th William Penn Hotel in downtow Pittsburgh. We would like all PC members to attend. As of this writing we know that Howard Bender and Ro Wilson will be at the club preview. W will also be working on the club story with Tim Corrigan there. All the co information, club badges, programs etc. will be there. So come and get them If you're working on a superhero, bring it along. There will also be a specia picture session at the Hillman Library

University of Pittsburgh, in Oakland. There will be a Supersnipe slide show and John Johns, president of the Art Institute of Pittsburgh, and a fan himself, will be doing cariacatures of club members.

As for the con itself, the following information was available at presstime:

The guests are:
Howard Bender
Ron Wilson
John Johns
Mike Gold
Arvel Jones
Paul Levitz
Jim Shooter
Len Wein
Bill Wilson
and
Marv Wolfman.

The con work schedule is as follows: Whenever possible we would like all club members to work all three days. We do recognize the fact that it is not possible for everyone to do this. We are willing to work around YOUR schedule be we must know what your schedule is.

Our biggest need will be for runners and security. Each runner will be covering 10 dealers' tables. As a runner you must keep an eye on these tables. If a dealer is having any problems other than security refer them to Greg Eide. Friday and Saturday we will be operating in two 6 hour shifts. Sunday 1 6 hour shift. In addition we will need people to man the club information center, where we will have the club table set up for members to sell their items on. We ask each member to have items priced before he or she puts them on the table.

We need twelve people for each six hour shift. (9-3 and 3-9, Friday and Saturday; 12-6 Sunday). We also need six people each shift for the club information center. While this is a long time, most people will not be working all the time. You should have plenty of time for shopping and the events.

Workshops with the pros are scheduled in both the writing and art areas. Let us know your name and area and who you would like to work with.

Each PRO will be asked to spend six hours each day at the club information center, talking, giving autographs, and sketching in shifts of three hours. There are plenty of pros coming, so share your shift with some of your favorites. (These shifts will be spaced throughout the day).

For you Costumers out there, if you don't have a costume and want to enter the parade, you can go to Maier's costume shop. There will be a discount if enough people go. Remember...this year's theme is the Justice League vs. the Avengers.

For a tentative Con Schedule see the inside front cover of this issue of PFF.

Let's make this the best PITTCON ever.

PARTING SHOTS

After sending out numerous copies of our last issue to numerous fanzines (including TBG, TNJ, RBCC, and TCR), the first review has finally come in. It's in TCR 155 and it says:

"The issue I have before me is number 35, and is presumably the latest (it's a bi-monthly). For a small circulation zine, it's certainly well put together, and the articles (a definitive one about CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED by Michael Sawyer, a column about the legal end of the comics industry by Tom Hegeman, and various others) are all interesting and well written. So, again, if you're seeking the kind of entertaining, well-done fanzine this is, order PFF 35.—MT"

We'll keep you posted on the rest of the jury. In the meantime let us know what you think. After all this is the Bulletin of the Pittsburgh Comix Club.

• • •

The latest issue of THE COMICS JOURNAL came just the other day, and it is by far the best issue yet. Gary Groth seems very comfortable in this new format and the magazine comes off as intelligent without being pompous or high-handed. This issue is 92 pages with color covers by Staton and Fujitake. Contents contain and Fujitake. The contents contain an and the usual features, reviews, etc. Well worth the $1.00 price tag. Order from:

THE COMICS JOURNAL
PO BOX 292
RIVERDALE, MD.
20840

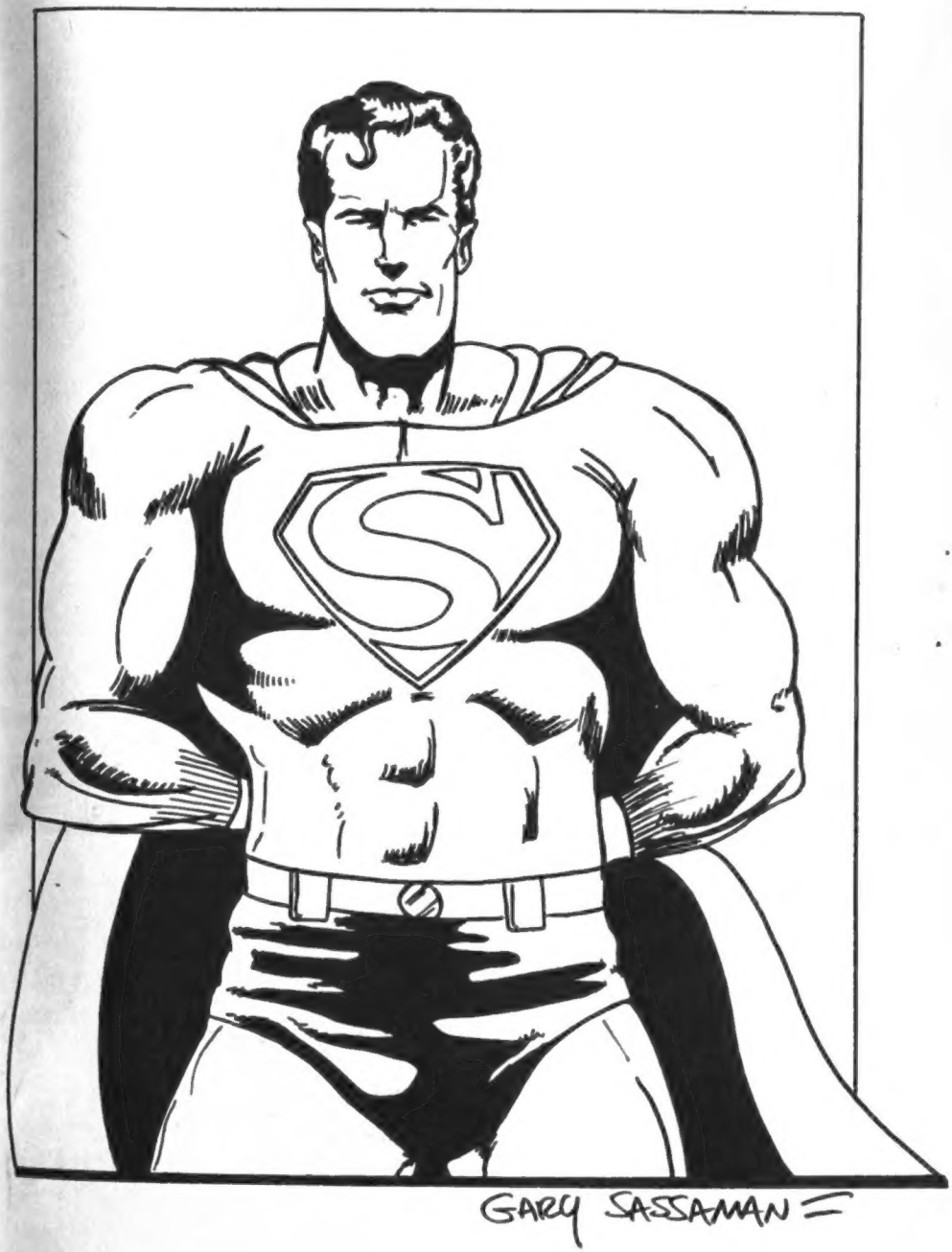
Subs are $6.00 for ten issues.

• • •

This recently appeared in PEOPLE magazine.

An aloof Linda Ronstadt, the gov's guest, sat a a deserted buffet table. She'd brought along her own entertainment—a Spiderman comic book.

A girl after my own heart...among other things.


GARY SASSAMAN

NEXT ISSUE:

Absolutely nothing about Cheryl Ladd, Farrah Fawcett-Majors or Cheryl Tiegs!

PITTSBURGH FAN FORUM

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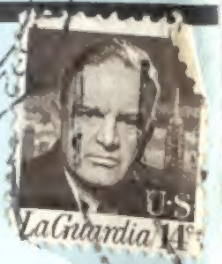
Pittsburgh, Pa.
15219

TO:



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